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JEWISH NEWS

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Get the popcorn and tour the world

Clara Silver, special to the WJN

The 18th annual Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival (AAJFF), May 12-16, is experimenting with a new partnership with Cinetopia, the Michigan Theater's signature annual film festival which runs May 10-19. The new collaboration is expected to be a boost for both festivals, increasing the Jewish themed content at Cinetopia, while broadening the AAJFF's exposure in the community. Director of the AAJFF, Karen Freedland, noted that, "collaborating with Cinetopia is an exciting opportunity to share Jewish film with so many more people while still preserving our festival's Jewish character. Russ, Sarah, and everyone at the Michigan Theater have been great to work with. We're really excited for this year."

The Samuel Project-eating lunch

Russ Collins, Executive Director of the Michigan Theater and Sarah Escalante, Cinetopia Festival Director approached Freedland when Cinetopia moved to May and the dates were going to overlap with the AAJFF. Escalante stated that, "The AAJFF shares our commitment to bringing the community together through the medium of film, and we're all extremely excited by this partnership and opportunity to welcome AAJFF sponsors and staff to join together with Cinetopia patrons, guest filmmakers, volunteers, and staff for an amazing 10-days of films." As part of the collaboration, the AAJFF will preserve its five-day format, but showing two instead of three films per day during its festival days at the Michigan Theater, its long-time home. Additional films with Jewish sensibility will be shown as part of the greater Cinetopia festival with multiple screenings and/or in different locations. In addition, the collaboration has yielded a special combination pass for AAJFF sponsors, which provides access to all its films and sponsor dinner, as well as all Cinetopia films, with options to upgrade to include Cinetopia parties and more.

This year's AAJFF will include 9 full length films and six short films presented together at one sitting, and will co-sponsor two additional full length films with Cinetopia. The opening of Cinetopia on May 10, at 8:00 p.m. will be a special event featuring the film *Before You Know It*, which boasts actors Alec Baldwin, Mandy Patinkin, and Judith Light, at the Michigan Theater as a joint Cinetopia/AAJFF film. The film's story centers on a pair of sisters who discover that the mother they thought was dead is actually alive and starring in a soap opera. Attending the Cinetopia opening event will be the film's co-writers, Hannah Peral Utt and Jen Tullock, who por-

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Hometown filmmaker Shira Steiner

Emily Slomovits, staff writer

Family secrets, if left to fester for too long, will end up spilling out in unexpected ways. In University of Michigan graduate Shira Steiner and Jeremy Borison's new film, *Boxes* a grandmother and granddaughter explore what it means to have a relationship with someone, even when you feel like you can't tell them everything about your life, and what happens when you finally do. Throw in the fact that the granddaughter is trying to figure out how to come out to her religious grandmother, and the grandmother is trying to hide another life, another family, that she had before the Holocaust, and it becomes even more nuanced. The film, which comes to both the Detroit and Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festivals in May, is based on Steiner's own experience with her grandmother, and her struggles with coming out and still trying to retain her Jewishness. WJN spoke with Steiner about the inspiration for the film, her identity as a Jewish artist, and what it means to come back and show her work in her hometown.

Shira Steiner

WJN: How did you decide to make this film?

Steiner: This film was a collaboration between the writer/director of the film, Jeremy Borison, and myself. He had recently returned from a trip to Israel and I told him about an idea that had been swimming around in my mind since my own last visit to Israel when I had seen my grandmother's grave for the first time. At the time, I was coming to terms with my sexuality and realized that I would

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SooJi Min-Maranda leads ALEPH

Josefin Dolsten (JTA) — SooJi Min-Maranda rarely sees other Jewish people who look like her.

"I often feel very isolated as a Jew of color living in the Midwest," she said.

Min-Maranda, who lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with her husband and two children, was born in Korea but moved with her family to the United States at the age of 3.

SooJi Min-Miranda

In her role as executive director of ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal, she may be the most visible person of color leading a Jewish religious organization. Though 11 percent of American Jews do not identify as white, according to the Steinhardt Social Research Institute's American Jewish Population Project, there are few people of color in visible leadership roles in the community.

"At my positional level, I don't have peers," Min-Maranda, 49, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in a phone interview last week.

Min-Maranda, who has been leading ALEPH for a little over a year, wants to both increase the number of Jews of color that lead Jewish organizations and raise awareness in the wider community about Jews of different backgrounds.

She recently participated in the #ShareHerStory campaign, an initiative by the Jewish Multiracial Network, Jewish Women's Archive and Repair the World to amplify the voices of Jewish women of color. Min-Maranda was one of 10 Jewish women whose stories were highlighted as part of the Purim campaign.

"I am a very strong believer in the power of telling stories," said Min-Maranda, noting that as part of her conversion she adopted the name Seeprah, the feminine singular form of the Hebrew verb meaning "to tell."

"The power of the story to humanize and bring people together at a very intimate level is extraordinarily powerful," she said. "So I think the idea of sharing stories reduces barriers and increases connectedness."

At ALEPH, Min-Maranda is working on a range of projects, including engaging people

Continued on page 3

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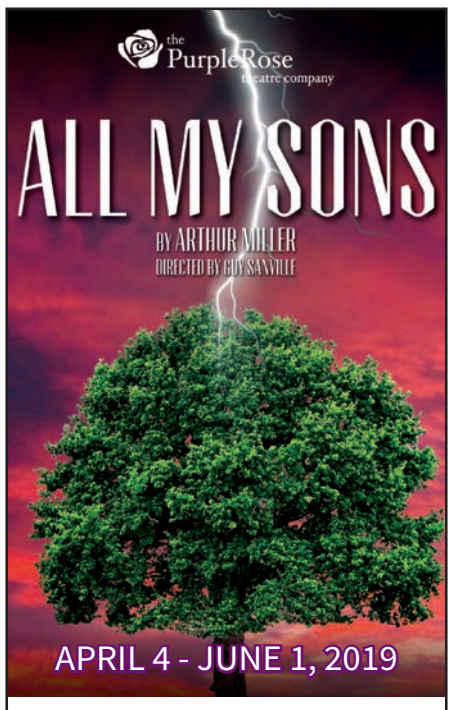

How far will a man go to protect his family and his interests? Joe Keller desperately wants to secure the business he spent so many years constructing, ready to hand it down to his son Chris. Joe's wife Kate is still waiting for their eldest son Larry to return from war, determined that he is alive and will marry the former girl-next-door, Ann, the daughter of Joe's former business partner. To complicate this family drama, Chris and Ann are in love and want to get married. ***All My Sons*** shows a post-war American family in a spiral of lies, greed, love, and loss.
734.433.7673 or PurpleRoseTheatre.org

From the Editor

Who knew how much I would enjoy editing and publishing the Washtenaw Jewish News? I didn't. For the past few years, I had been writing a weekly blog for the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation. I often wrote about Jewish time: I noted the weekly parasha, the holidays, the seasons, the fascinating intricacies of the Jewish calendar and astronomy. The WJN is on a different cycle, the months of the Gregorian calendar a rough match to the Jewish cycle. This year, the entire month of May falls within the 49 days between Pesach and Shavuot. The days of counting and waiting, suspended between liberation and revelation, braiding our traditions into our lives, and our lives into our traditions. ■

Mizrach Omer Calender, by Moses H. Henry, Cincinnati, 1850. Ink on paper. Courtesy of the HUC Skirball Cultural Center Museum Collection, Los Angeles. A mizrach serves as a symbolic orientation towards Jerusalem, the direction towards which prayer is oriented. This mizrah has a second function as an omer calendar, as the forty-nine roundels in the border count the seven weeks between the holidays of Passover and Shavuot. The legend at the top reads "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither" (Psalms 137:5).

Letter to the Editor

In the April issue of WJN, Danny Steinmetz trumpets his support for boycotting Jews because of where they live [Steinmetz does not buy products made in the West Bank]. The intent is ethnic cleansing, i.e. pressuring them to leave under duress. The prescription is entirely asymmetrical, as reciprocating relocation has been stridently rejected. There has been a pilot trial of this approach: all Jews were evacuated from Gaza; now rockets are lobbed from there at children in occupied Tel Aviv.

Steinmetz prides himself on being more nuanced than the mainstream BDS, which extends the hostile action to all Israeli Jews, and thinks that is enough to escape a charge of aiding and abetting antisemitism. A prerequisite for even minimal plausibility of such an argument is enumeration of any non-Jewish targets of Steinmetz and his fellow boycotters over the years (Arabs in South Sudan and Darfur? Han Chinese in Tibet and Xinjiang? Russians in Crimea and Ossetia? Turks in Kurdistan? Sunnis in Baluchistan? Alawites in Homs and Aleppo?). If the righteous indignation is blinkered to Jews only, that undermines the sanctimony. BDS proponents are a heterogeneous lot, including Jew-haters and self-hating Jews. Their mindsets and psyches do not matter to the rest of us. What matters is the harm they seek to do.

Israel is the sole functional democracy in the whole Middle East. Its citizens face undeniable dangers, and they have the right to decide for themselves how to deal with them. Outsiders of other nationalities (including Jewish ones) have no standing to interfere.

Henry Brysk

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SooJi-Min, continued from page 1

who may not know about Jewish Renewal, developing the next generation of Jewish leaders, creating a dual narrative training about Israel and the Palestinians for its rabbinical students and finding ways to welcome Jews of color.

Jewish Renewal emerged in the late 1960s and '70s as the counterculture movement was at its peak. It draws on Hasidic and Kabbalistic teachings and music, centering those philosophies and practices within a progressive framework. ALEPH lists 52 organizations, individuals and synagogues in its directory of Jewish Renewal communities.

Michigan is strongly represented in the ALEPH leadership. Min-Miranda and Linda Jo Doctor, who is ALEPH vice-chair, are members of the Ann Arbor ALEPH affiliate, Pardes Hannah, and there are several other affiliates in Michigan and the midwest. ALEPH's board chair is Rabbi Aura Ahuvia, a congregational rabbi who lives in Troy.

The movement describes itself as combining "the socially progressive values of egalitarianism, the joy of Hasidism, the informed do-it-yourself spirit of the havurah movement, and the accumulated wisdom of centuries of tradition." Jewish Renewal emerged from the havurah movement, independent prayer and study groups that were lay-led and provided an intimate alternative to the more hierarchical synagogue structure.

Min-Maranda served as the director of Temple Beth Emeth in Ann Arbor from 2011 to 2017. Previously she served as executive director of the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, a nonprofit that focuses on adolescent sexual health and parenting, and the Korean American Community Service in Chicago, which provides social services to the local Korean and Latino immigrant communities.

Growing up, Min-Maranda's family was not religious. She learned about Judaism in her late 20s when she started attending lectures about Judaism.

The lessons she learned resonated deeply and a few years later she went through a formal conversation at a Reform synagogue in Chicago.

Since then, Min-Maranda has found new ways of making Judaism her own by incorporating different philosophies that complement her practice, including meditation and yoga.

"I became interested in mindfulness meditation and realized that it seemed empty without being anchored by my faith, so I was trained and studied Jewish mindfulness meditation," she said. "From that realized I needed to get more into my body so I did training in yoga to try to connect my mind and body."

Making Jewish Renewal an inclusive movement is crucial to Min-Maranda.

"I am in and part of multiple identities simultaneously, and that's what ALEPH has room for," she said. "It's the first place that I feel has the possibility of allowing me to be fully myself. We're not there yet, but the possibility is there." ■

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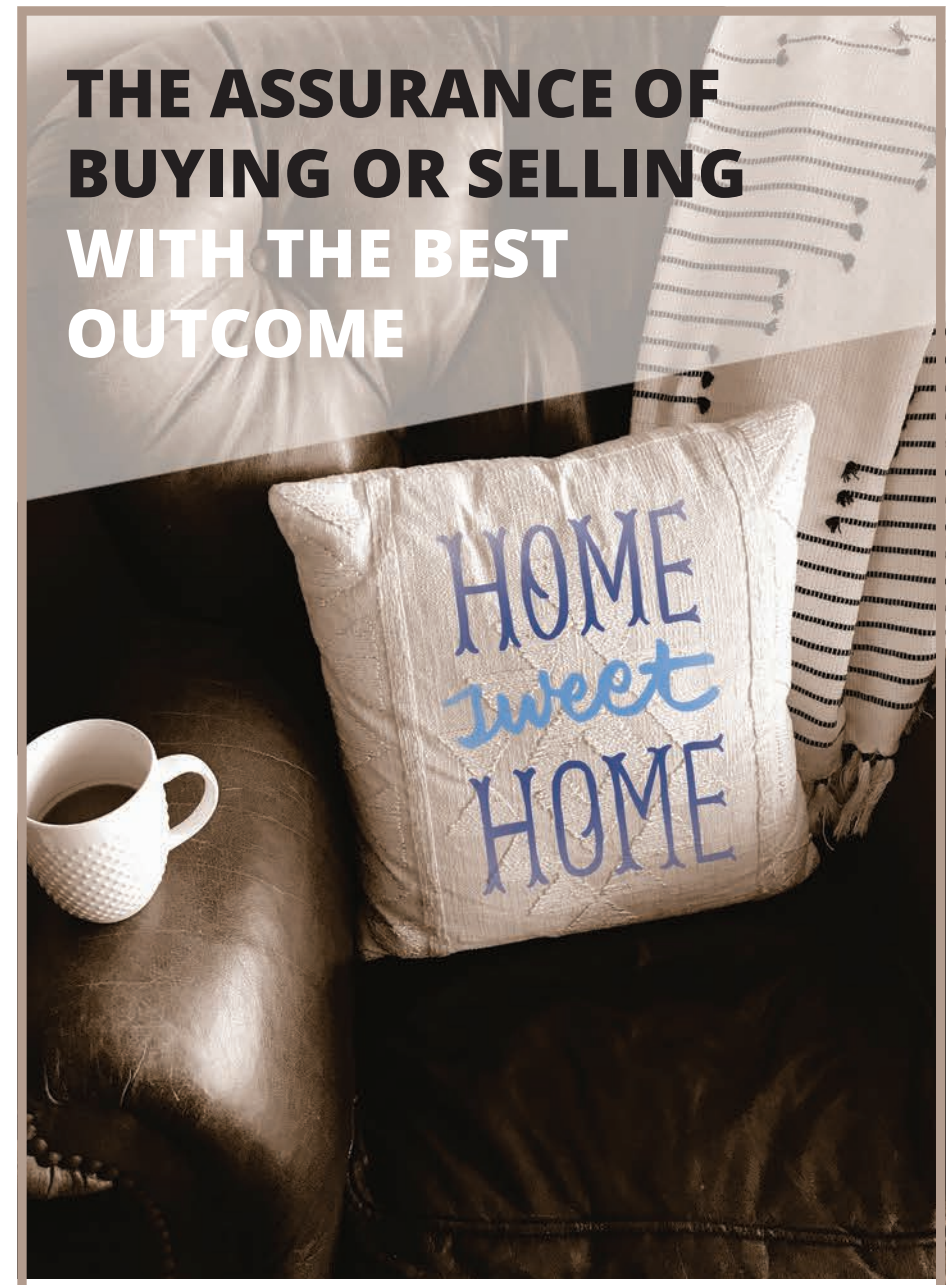

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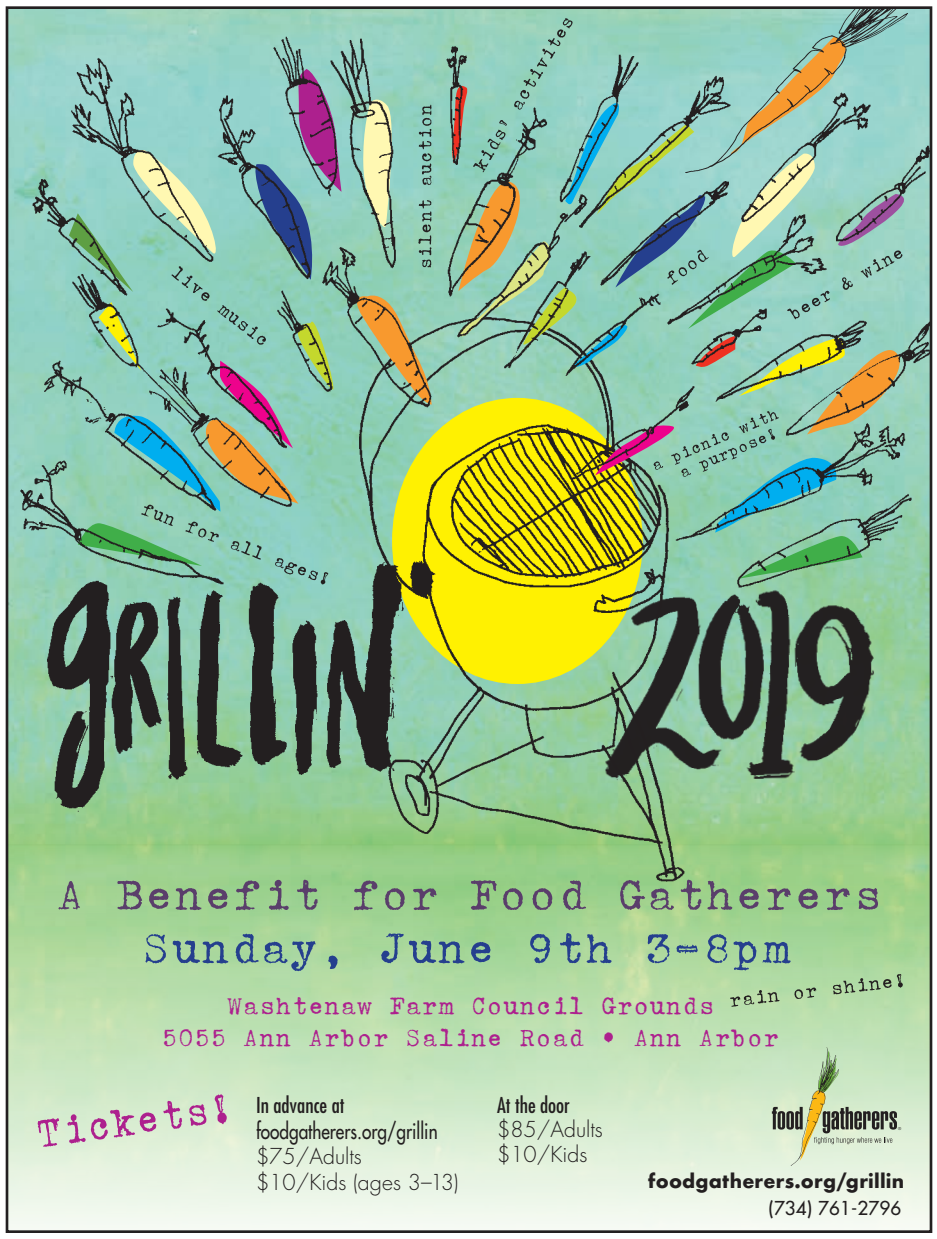

Limmud Michigan featured Ann Arborites

Joelle Abramowitz, Limmud Michigan 2019 Programming Co-Chair, Special to the WJN

The fourth annual Limmud Michigan went off with great success on March 31 at the Jewish Community Center of Metro Detroit. Limmud Michigan is modeled on Britain's highly successful Limmud Conference, which started in 1980 and has grown and spread across the globe to cities in the United States, Canada, Israel, Australia, Hungary, Russia, South Africa, and elsewhere. Limmud is a volunteer run festival of Jewish learning in which community members step up to lead sessions on topics of their choice, and community members attend to learn with their peers. In Michigan, the event brings people from all over the state together for a day of Jewish learning for all ages and all backgrounds. This year, over 500 participants attended over 70 sessions ranging in content from Jewish text study to acapella sing-along, politics, art, literature, philosophy, poetry, and more.

PHOTO CREDIT: YAKOV FAYTLIN PHOTOGRAPHY

A bustling start to the day at Limmud Michigan 2019.

A notable number of Ann Arborites presented at this year's Limmud Michigan. These included several University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University faculty. Maya Barzilai presented on the *Birds' Heads Haggadah* and her family's story, Karla Goldman on the intersection of Jewish identity and feminism, Joelle Abramowitz on examining our views toward money through a Jewish lens, and David Victor on Hannah Arendt. University of Michigan archivist Mike Smith also offered a session on the Davidson Digital Archive of Jewish Detroit History. Several local clergy presented: Rabbi Robert Dobrusin, rabbi emeritus of Beth Israel Congregation, on the two most important words you will say at the seder; Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg, spiritual leader of Pardes Hannah, on leaping and waiting as spiritual practices for Passover and beyond; and Rabbi Ora Nitkin-Kaner, rabbi of the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation, on Reconstructionist Judaism.

Many students in the University of Michigan's Jewish Communal Leadership Program also presented sessions. Hannah Berger, Megan Bernard, Lauren Fine, Nora Greenstein, Sam Langstein, Ashley Schnaar, and Sara Weinfeld organized a panel addressing fears of the Jewish community and how to create a stronger vision for the Jewish future. Lauren Fine, along with Gabe Slabosky, provided a session on the tax foreclosure crisis in Detroit. Sam Langstein led a session on Jewish masculinity and the future of "nice Jewish boys" in the age of the #MeToo movement. Graduate students in other University of Michigan programs shared their expertise as well: Ilana Spencer, a University of Michigan Masters student studying Educational Leadership and Policy, presented on practices for transforming Jewish education. Kevin Lieberman, a Robotics PhD Candidate at the University of Michigan, taught on how insights from human factors research may be applied to support the Jewish community.

Several community members put forward sessions as well. Members of Temple Beth Emeth Abbie Egherman, Rebecca Epstein, Rachel Goldberg, and Wendy Lawrence shared their experiences joining their rabbi and faith leaders from all over the country in protest outside of the detention center for unaccompanied minors in Tornillo, Texas. Gabrielle Pescador presented on integrating Chinese healing arts with Jewish practice.

The Ann Arbor community is lucky to have so many knowledgeable individuals with such a wide range of expertise and to have had them share their wisdom at Limmud Michigan 2019. Planning for the 2020 event is already beginning, and Limmud Michigan is always looking for people interested in getting involved, ranging in commitment from a few hours helping at a single event to core responsibilities as organizers and leaders. For more information, visit the Limmud Michigan website at http://www.limmudmichigan.org and learn more about volunteering at http://www.limmudmichigan.org/volunteer. ■

Hand in Hand educating for a shared society

Rebecca Kanner, special to the WJN

On Sunday, May 19, 2 p.m. Michigan Friends of Hand in Hand will welcome Dr. Merav Ben-Nun speaking on the topic "Creating Peace: Education and Community Building in Regions of Conflict." The presentation will be at the First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor. Dr. Ben-Nun is the former Deputy Director of the Community Department at Israel's Hand in Hand schools as well as one of the founders of the Hand in Hand Haifa School, which now has over 150 students.

Dr. Merav Ben-Nun

Hand in Hand: Center for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel is a network of integrated, bilingual schools for Jewish and Arab children in Israel. Hand in Hand was co-founded by Israeli Arab educator Amin Khalaf and Israeli American educator Lee Gordon in 1997.

Dr. Ben-Nun, who holds a PhD in international education, is sure to inspire the audience to consider the importance of multi-cultural education – the value of growing up telling one's own story and the value of growing up listening to others' stories. Dr. Ben-Nun's presentation promises to be especially interesting as she ties together her personal story and her academic knowledge of this important topic.

Debbie Zivan, a member of the interfaith group in Michigan supporting Hand in Hand , explains the school's importance to her. "Like so many Jewish people of my age who grew up in the Conservative movement, the history and politics of Israel were told exclusively from a Jewish perspective and were a significant part of my religious education. I even won an award for excellence in Israel studies although I think that was more a reflection of my passion for Israel than my academic knowledge."

Zivan continues, "Over the years, my Jewish identity began to shift as I became more aware of the complexity of Israel's history and the entrenched conflict. My passion for Israel, built on only one side of the story, began to feel shallow and flimsy. In hindsight, I think this educational strategy, more than anything, undermined my Jewish identity. My realization that my Jewish educators left out important information made me uncomfortable and ultimately led to me questioning my Jewish identity more broadly. Over the years I've reconciled many of these issues but it is because of my early Jewish education that I feel so passionately about the Hand in Hand school system. Nurturing fertile ground for hope and peacemaking is happening at the Hand in Hand schools because it is from a foundation of play and friendship and personal security that students are telling and listening to one another's story. Strong identities are being built based on mutual understanding and respect."

Dr. Ben-Nun's presentation will give a deeper understanding of the impact of the Hand in Hand schools both for students and the broader community. First Presbyterian Church is located at 1432 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Following the program, there will be a reception. Call Don Redding, 734-276-8426 for more information. ■

American Jews facing the future

Nora Greenstein, special to the WJN

On March 28, community members and students alike poured into the University of Michigan Museum of Art to attend "Facing the Future of American Judaism," a panel conversation bringing together Jewish professional voices in the field to discuss and share their thoughts on the future of the American Jewish community. Moderated by Rabbi Josh Whinston of Temple Beth Emeth, the panel featured Professor Deborah Dash Moore, Frederick G. L. Huetwell Professor of History and Judaic Studies; Professor Karla Goldman, Director, Jewish Communal Leadership Program, Sol Drachler Professor of Social Work; Rabbi Rick Jacobs, President of the Union for Reform Judaism, and Tilly Shames, Executive Director at the University of Michigan Hillel.

The evening began with each panelist sharing their thoughts on how Judaism in America is changing, and what they see as potential strengths and barriers for future Jewish leaders. Deborah Dash Moore framed the evolution of American Judaism in tandem with the United States and acknowledged the ways that Jews have, over the years, adapted alongside America's changes. "So, when we speak about American Judaism, we need to recognize that the 'American' modifier will mean something different down the road...American Jews live Jewish lives even if they don't observe Judaism." She ended by encouraging the crowd to, "...take some cues from American Jews to figure out how Judaism can be understood to embrace their lives."

Karla Goldman used the conversations she facilitates as the director of the Jewish Communal Leadership Program as an example of the questions she has seen the Jewish community begin to use when thinking about the future. "We need to redefine the center," Goldman said when speaking about how Jewish communities frame who in the Jewish community is seen as an "insider" or "outsider."

Tilly Shames categorized the Jewish needs of the current generation of college students in three ways: beyond the *bima*, beyond Facebook, and beyond the building. "If your experiences aren't on Instagram, they simply did not happen," Shames said of the ways to reach out and connect to the younger generation of Jews and described their need for personal and individualized programming. Shames noted the impact of programs that Hillel hosts outside of its space, such as ShabUM in the fall, an event where Hillel closes its doors after services and students host Shabbat dinners in their homes, Greek houses, or dormitories. "This is the UberEats generation," she said, eliciting chuckles from the audience.

Rabbi Rick Jacobs took a different angle on the future of leadership, saying, "I'm actually not worried about the Jewish future." He shared narratives of working with young leaders and detailed his work with young Jewish leaders across the URJ system, seeing their advocacy and Jewish leadership work spurred by events such as the Parkland and Tree of Life shootings. He encouraged the audience to "make space for the future Jewish leaders in our life."

Rabbi Whinston posed a series of questions to the panelists, getting their take on different issues surrounding the future of American Judaism. In response to a question regarding the growing gap between American and Israeli Jews, Goldman brought up how a lack of dynamic conversations around the issue of Israel could play a significant role with younger Jews. "We can't pretend that we can address the growing alienation of young American Jews from Israel without talking about the Occupation and Israel's treatment of Palestinians," she said. Shames built on this, adding "What I am more concerned about are the students who say they don't know enough to have an opinion," acknowledging the importance of education and dialogue with regards to Israel, and helping students not feel judged for their thoughts on the issues.

Rabbi Jacobs, Tilly Shames, Deborah Dash Moore, Karla Goldman, Rabbi Whinston

Discussing the language and conversation around Jewish power in America amid the rise of antisemitism, the panelists noted that there needs to be a way to talk about Jewish power in America that does not play on antisemitic tropes. Shames shared, "I don't think there's any amount of power that we have that could stop antisemitism. We can only influence the response."

What conclusion arose about how to engage the next generation of Jewish leaders? "There is no formula," Goldman said, yet the panel shared their optimism about the future of American Judaism. Thanks to Temple Beth Emeth for organizing a thought-provoking conversation.

[Editor's note: I am sure many people had responses after Facing the Future forum. WJN *welcomes your thoughtful submissions on this topic.]*

Response to Facing the Future of American Judaism

By Simone Naomi Yehuda

I am a Reform Jew raised by a German father refugee from Hitler who instilled in me a profound love of Israel. He invented, for Israel, a machine that changes salt/ brackish water to fresh water (the membrane process). So it was with great interest that I attended the Facing the Future of American Judaism forum. Each of the speakers stressed the need for American Jews to embrace the diversity of America's Jews so as to instill a positive and healthy relationship with Judaism and its future.

Although all of us in attendance were clearly included, the primary focus of the remarks was on Jewish university students. What was highlighted was the need for Judaism to meet Jews where and how we live our daily lives. Although familiarity with technology, including all social media, is essential, also encouraged was learning how to "be/feel Jewish" in our daily lives while enjoying sports, celebrating holidays, even creating various venues for experiencing shabbat. Anti-Semitism, racism, homophobia, sexism, Islamophobia, ageism, etc., should be denounced and repudiated as destructive forces of our communal well-being. I couldn't agree more.

However, having recently spent 10 days in Israel, what shocked me there the most was the Orthodox stranglehold in just about every arena. Why is it still tolerated that the Orthodox wish to prevent women from riding certain buses, wearing certain clothes, walking down certain streets, praying at the Wailing Wall, etc.? Why do the Orthodox deem themselves the only denomination permitted to conduct weddings? Why, when prayers are about to begin at *shivas*, do some Orthodox rabbis ask women to remove themselves and go to the kitchen.

Although there was some discussion about the relationship between American Jews and Israel, why haven't we had a detailed discussion of Orthodoxy as a significant cause of the schism between Israel and American Jews? Why has there been no significant organized out-cry by American Jews? Is this a case of "inattentional blindness," Temple Grandin's use of a psychological phenomenon that causes us to miss (literally not see) things that are right in front of our eyes? By not facing all this, are we harming Israel's future? This kind of Orthodoxy, its growth and continued practice, especially in Israel, is out of step with (if not destructive of) the vital themes of diversity and modernity that were featured and highlighted in the evening's program. ■

AIPAC policy conference recap

[Editor's note: A handful of Ann Arborites attended the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) Policy Conference in Washington D.C. on March 24-26. I asked a few to report on their experiences.]

From Florence and Martin Gerber

Howard Kohr, AIPAC CEO, opened the recent AIPAC conference saying, "We're being challenged in a way that is new and far more aggressive." The intent of our critics and enemies, he added, "is not meant to inform, but to demonize us." We were part of a diverse group of 18,000 pro-Israel activists from different age groups, faiths, ethnicities and political viewpoints from all 50 states and other countries.

AIPAC was founded in 1951 by Isaiah Kenen, who saw that the American Jewish community during World War II was so politically weak it was unable to help Jews during the Holocaust. Since that time AIPAC has become America's foremost lobby supporting Israel. AIPAC's mission is to strengthen the relationship between Israel and America. Without America's support, Israel would find it hard to survive with Iran and its proxies in its neighborhood. For example, AIPAC was instrumental in getting the U.S. and Israel to work together to develop the Iron Dome.

AIPAC supports Israel regardless of who is prime minister. AIPAC is strictly bi-partisan. The national board consists of both Democrats and Republicans. Since the U. S. President and Congress often changes, AIPAC can only be effective if it remains bipartisan. Prime Minister Netanyahu expressed his appreciation to AIPAC for all its work in helping Israel. Benny Gantz, Netanyahu's chief rival in the upcoming Israeli election said he was a military man and would be better suited to address Israel's defense needs. Vice President Pence spoke about the administration's support of Israel and the deplorable antisemitic comments made in the congressional house by various representatives. He also gave credit to President Donald Trump for U.S. Recognition of the Golan Heights as part of Israel and his movement of the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem.

Former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley got a lot of applause because of the way she stood up to the anti-Israel bullying at the U.N. Numerous speakers at the convention included Secretary of State Michael Pompeo, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, Senator Chuck Schumer, Senator Mitch McConnell, Representative Kevin McCarthy, and Ambassador to Israel David Friedman.

After general assemblies on Sunday and Monday there were numerous educational breakout sessions with nationally known experts on a whole range of topics from Iran to South America to the future of the Middle East and beyond. In our opinion these breakout sessions were the best part of the conference.

On the last day of the conference all of us went to the Hill to lobby our senators and representatives to urge support for $3.3 billion in U.S. security assistance to Israel and $500 million in cooperative missile defense funding for Fiscal year 2020. We also urged the senators to support the bipartisan letter which would enhance security and economic cooperation authored by Senators Risch (R-ID and Menendez (D-NJ. In the House, Representatives were asked to support U.S.-Israel Cooperation Enhancement & Regional Security Act – authored by Representatives Deutch (D-FL) and Wilson (R-SC). We also asked for support of the bipartisan anti-BDS resolutions authored in the House by Representatives Schneider (D-IL) and Zeldin (R-NY).) and in the Senate authored by Senators Cardin(D-MD) and Portman (R-OH).

To learn more about the Convention, check website AIPAC.org An early bird discount is being offered for next year's Policy Conference which will be held in Washington, DC March 1-3, 2020. For more information, contact Xander Abrams, Michigan Area Director at

zabrams@aipac.org

From Ben Freed

The AIPAC Policy Conference is no longer really a "policy" conference. There are certainly some breakout sessions during which policy is discussed, but the 18,000 attendees do not show up to play an active role in determining the policy of the organization. The conference is more accurately a confusing cross between an Israel expo, a family reunion, a pep rally, a summer camp reunion, a three-day political stump speech, a fraternity/sorority reunion, a synagogue kiddish lunch, and a class reunion. Americans and Israelis of all religious and political stripes (okay, many religious and political stripes) gathered for the conference in Washington, D.C. and spent three days testing the limits of bipartisanship in our hyper-partisan era.

I attended my second Policy Conference this year as part of the AIPAC Leffell Israel Fellowship for rabbinical school students. As part of the fellowship we were given access to all of the plenaries and public breakout sessions as well as some exclusive meetings with AIPAC executives and other experts in the field of U.S.-Israel relations.

At the plenary sessions, an assembly line of United States congresswomen and men as well as senators and foreign heads of state paraded across the stage repeating the same lines about their dedication to the state of Israel, to its security, and to the American-(or Honduran- or Romanian-) Israel alliance.

There were also tense moments. A number of attendees (including myself) left the hall during a speech given by Vice President Michael Pence when he veered away from speaking about Israel and instead used much of his time at the podium to malign his political opponents. A number of American politicians from both parties took thinly veiled (or sometimes not-at-all veiled) shots at Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.), who had criticized AIPAC on Twitter in the weeks leading up to the conference.

An intriguing aspect of the plenary sessions is that, much like the State of the Union address, the speeches are constantly interrupted by ovations—many of them of the standing variety. Also like the State of the Union, it was interesting to watch how many people stood up to applaud what statements. How much of the crowd was enthusiastic about mentions of the two-state solution? Probably about two thirds, maybe three quarters. Who agreed that Israel's security must always be guaranteed in any future peace agreement? Everyone. As someone whose political views do not necessarily conform with the majority of the crowd at the conference, it was also an interesting feeling to at times rise seemingly isolated or to sit while others cheered pronouncements that I vehemently disagreed with. It was sad to see that few people joined me to stand and cheer for those who condemned Islamophobia and White Supremacy alongside anti-Semitism. It pained me to sit and watch the majority of the crowd rise to cheer for the proclamation that Donald Trump is the greatest friend Israel has ever had.

One of AIPAC's strengths is that it continues to draw broad support from those on both sides of the aisle. The price for that bipartisanship is the discomfort of strange bedfellows. It does concern me that right-wing governments on both sides of the Atlantic seem to be attempting to squeeze the left out of the Israel discussion. As one AIPAC staffer said to me, "if anyone succeeds in making Israel a wedge issue (i.e. by managing to successful paint their opponents as 'anti-' or even merely not sufficiently 'pro-Israel'), then we all lose."

In between the pronouncements and speeches were videos highlighting Israeli technological brilliance and social activism along with stories of individual Israelis overcoming adversity. Particularly touching stories included that of Dr. Yasmin Abu Fraiha, a Bedouin pediatrician who is bringing genetic testing to her community. "My mother told me that when you educate a man, you educate an individual," she told the crowd. "But when you educate a woman, you educate a nation." There was also the story of Moran Samuel, a promising young basketball player who woke up one morning paralyzed from the waist down. After intense physical therapy and some cajoling, she began playing wheelchair basketball and has become a para-Olympic champion. These stories, alongside those of Israelis founding new youth groups in depressed neighborhoods and launching lunar probes helped give depth and a personal element to a country that to many can seem far away and one-dimensional.

While the plenaries were long, my favorite experiences at the conference were the smaller breakout sessions and the conversations in the hallways where I had the opportunity to speak with and learn from people of different backgrounds who make the U.S.-Israel relationship a central part of either their professional or volunteer lives. I spoke to Evangelical Christians who feel deep connections through their faith to the land of Israel. I heard from members of the Black community who feel deep personal connections to the Jewish community in America and the State of Israel in large part thanks to personal relationships they formed in college and as young professionals. I also attended a panel on which feminists who are trying to bring the Israel discussion into progressive spaces discussed their successes and challenges. Unfortunately those conversations were off the record, so I can't share more about them, but they were the moments that truly made the conference worthwhile. ■

AIPAC Leffell Rabbinic Fellows

Local college students arrested at Birthright protest

Zu Weinger and Etta Heisler, special to the WJN

On Friday, April 5, a group of two hundred young Jews, including ten from Michigan, gathered in New York City to demand that Taglit-Birthright Israel include information about the Occupation and Palestinian experiences on the free trips to Israel they offer to Jews ages 18 to 26. Birthright trips are known among youth for Jewish matchmaking, partying in Tel Aviv, and visiting the Kotel. Birthright is notorious among young Jewish activists for using maps that don't show the Green Line, the internationally recognized border denoting Gaza and the West Bank, and for silencing and even removing participants who ask about Israeli and American support for the Occupation.

The demonstration was organized by IfNotNow, a growing movement of young Jews working to "end American Jewish support for the Occupation." Members gathered in New York's Bryant Park around 8 a.m. on Friday morning and then marched toward the Birthright headquarters with signs that read "Show us the truth" and "Confront the Crisis." After stopping traffic on Third Avenue during rush hour, the group convened directly outside the building and several leaders sat down to block the doors to the offices. While some folks walked over the young Jews to enter the building, and others took a side entrance escorted by security, no Birthright staff came down to address the concerns of the protesters. Shortly after 10 a.m., fifteen demonstrators were arrested, including two students from Michigan.

Among the arrested was Washtenaw Community College student and IfNotNow member Zu Weinger. "Growing up, I didn't realize how much blind support Jewish communities can give to the Israeli government," he said. "When I started asking about the Occupation and why we don't talk about it, no one knew what to say. I showed up because I care about the future of Jewish people and the freedom and dignity of Palestinian people."

Amanda Kaminsky who recently went on a Birthright program, also attended the demonstration with a contingent of members from IfNotNow at University of Michigan. "On my Birthright trip, I was told that military strength was the only way to keep the Jewish community safe, even if that meant sacrificing the basic rights of Palestinians," said Kaminsky. "What drives my work with IfNotNow is the understanding that what's safe for the Jews has to be safe for Palestinians, too."

Weinger and Kaminsky represent a growing movement of young folks who are highlighting the moral dilemma many liberal Jews face in taking a "free trip" from major funders and leaders like Sheldon Adelson and Michael Steinhardt, who also support President Trump. Increasingly, young Jews are seeing Birthright not just as a free trip, but as a bribe, and they're unwilling to overlook the moral disaster the Occupation creates for American Jews, and the daily nightmare in which Palestinians are living.

The rise of IfNotNow and widespread conversations following demonstrations against institutions like Birthright continue to highlight the existence of American Jews who are unsettled by the violent occupation of Palestinian territories by the Israeli government, and whose voices are often drowned out by the assertions of many institutions (and the wealthy donors that support them) that participation in Jewish communal life requires the support of Israel at any cost. These folks refuse to let fear and isolation stand in the way of their Jewish values and ethics. "I was so angry when I realized I was lied to [on my Birthright trip] at the cost of Palestinian lives," says University of Michigan undergrad Ariel Friedlander. "I am grateful that American Jews are taking a stand against the Occupation. We are making our voices heard...organizations like Birthright do not represent American Jewish youth." ■

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Aron Kaufman and the Dream Ensemble in concert at Kerrytown

Interview by Emily Slomovits

Aron Kaufman has always been a busy man, balancing a music career and a 24-year teaching career in Judaic Studies at the Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor. But in the last 12 months, his commitments have gone to a new level. A percussionist for the Rob Crozier Jazz Ensemble, The Lunar Octet, his duo with saxophonist and flautist Paul Vornhagen, and his newest group, Aron Kaufman and the Dream Ensemble, he's recorded on 5 different albums in the last year. He's also contributed to the soundtracks for two Jewish films, and gigs around Southeast Michigan with all of the afore-mentioned bands. Kaufman is particularly excited, though, about his newest recording, "Firefly Dream," which is his first as a bandleader. The CD's release will be heralded with a concert on May 16th at the Kerrytown Concert House. I spoke with Kaufman about his new CD, the way his Jewishness is incorporated into his music, and the fun and challenge of studio recording work.

WJN: What was the inspiration for Firefly's Dream, both the CD in general, and the title?

Kaufman: It has been a dream of mine to form my own band, and record an album of my own compositions. I began composing music when I took a course in Creative Musicianship with Professor Jane Heirich at the University of Michigan. I discovered the joy of composing

Brian Andres.

and performing original works with bands such as Quick City, Montage, Pangaea, Lunar Glee Club and the Lunar Octet. Writing music for the Lunar Glee Club and the Lunar Octet, which featured a unique line up of horns, guitars, and percussion was an incredible opportunity for me as a composer. When the Lunar Octet took a hiatus in the year 2000, I continued composing music with that band's sound in mind.

I was invited to perform my music at the All Arts Thread Festival in Ypsilanti in 2018. I jumped at the chance to form my own band, Aron Kaufman and the Dream Ensemble, and play the pieces that are now featured on my CD. My friend and bass player extraordinaire, Jeff Dalton invited me to record at Lakeside Studios in Waterford, Michigan following our first full length concert last July at the Kerrytown Concert House. Jeff worked tirelessly to polish this diamond of a record, co-producing the album with me. Presto – my first album! The compositions on this album are inspired by the music I love and by my own investigations and study of various world drumming traditions. As a child living in Puerto Rico, I fell in love with the sound of congas and clave. Hearing the guitar of Carlos Santana played on the radio when *Abraxas* came out was a revelation to me. His style of playing guitar hit me like a thunderbolt. What captivated me about Carlos Santana was his soaring lyricism, his spirited improvisations, and the way he blended rock, blues, and Afro-Cuban drumming into a seamless whole.

Many artists have inspired me over the years from all over the music spectrum. I fell in love with Herbie Hancock's *Headhunters* album in high school, which led me to further explore the world of Jazz. Listening to odd meter compositions by Dave Brubeck, the folk jazz group Oregon, and the iconic Detroit ensemble the Griot Galaxy helped me appreciate the power and beauty of rhythm as a compositional tool, inspiring me to develop my own creative rhythmic patterns and compose melodies that reflect my rhythmic interests. My studies of Middle Eastern, Cuban, and African drumming traditions have also inspired my work as a composer. I became fascinated with polyrhythms while accompanying Biza Sompa's Congolese dance classes at the University of Michigan. When I began learning to play the Tar, a North African frame drum, I composed a rhythm in 11/8, which led to the creation of two pieces on this album: Elevenly Blues and Ode to Firefly. The song Rhythm Magic is partially inspired by my study of a Cuban Rhythm called Guarapachangeo with Cuban master drummer Pepe Espinosa. It is also inspired by the students in my after-school drum class at Hillel Day School.

The title cut, Firefly's Dream, is a calypso tune that Paul Keller arranged. I hashed out the horn melody on the piano and Paul helped me complete the composition when I met with him at the Firefly Club. Now that I think about it, the tune title probably came from that experience of sitting with Paul at the club and working out the tune. When I was thinking about CD titles, my first choice was Obrigado ("thank you" in Portuguese), the third track on the CD, which is dedicated to South African Jazz pianist Abdullah Ibrahim.

But when I began searching for images for the album cover, I found a photograph of dazzling lights that I fell in love with and decided to use for my album. Firefly's Dream worked better with that image, so that is what I decided to use as the CD title. I also thought it would be great to start out the album with a song that makes you want to dance!

WJN: This album is definitely a jazz album, but is infused with several different styles of jazz, as well as other styles mixed in. What do you love about playing and composing jazz music, and what were some of the most fun songs to compose and record?

Kaufman: When I compose, I don't necessarily have a particular genre in mind. I usually begin with a melody or a rhythm that I hear in my head, or one that I work out on the piano. Sometimes a melody comes when I am working out a new pattern on the congas. The final cut on the album, Mano Abierta (Open hand), was composed this way. I got a melodic idea while playing five congas, and developed that melody on the piano. What I love most about performing the music that I write is the feeling of adventure that I experience when I am playing with my fellow musicians. We set sail with a destination in mind, but you never know what that journey will be like. The melodies that I compose create a structure that allows for creative exploration. It is sheer delight having the opportunity to play with the outstanding musicians in my ensemble and listening to the tales they spin as master improvisers. Each song on this album was a joy to compose and record. I especially love the challenge of writing melodies in odd meters (other than 4/4 and 3/4) that are soulful and catchy. Ode to Ivy, Elevenly Blues, and Yoom Bop are all tunes that reflect my interest in composing music in relatively unfamiliar meters to most listeners. The album has the feeling of a live recording as nearly every tune was recorded in one take, and we had minimal separation between the instruments in the studio.

WJN: You've been recording a lot this past year; what have been some of the challenges, and some of the exciting parts of being in the studio that much?

Kaufman: The challenge of playing in the studio is creating music that is exciting and that has vitality. That can be hard to accomplish when you are not playing in front of a live audience. You have to trust yourself, be "in the moment," and play from the heart.

When my Dream Ensemble went into the studio last July, it was my first time leading my own band. I was pumped up and also quite nervous. I just hoped that we could play my tunes the way I heard them in my head. On Yoom Bop, the second track on the CD, I played the drum set and Olman E. Piedra played the congas. On most tunes, I am playing congas, but I wanted to challenge myself to play traps on Yoom Bop, which is in 5/4 time. Olman had never even rehearsed or performed that tune with us. I love the way Olman played congas on that track. I think you have to be willing to take those kinds of risks in the studio if you want the music to sound fresh and inventive. It is so important to trust the musicality of the players you are working with. We recorded nine songs in three and half hours. Jeff Dalton did a masterful job recording and mixing the album. I am beyond thrilled with the music we produced. My songs are played with power, precision and terrific energy. Sam, Jeff and Olman help me lay down a powerful groove in each track. The solos by all band members are inspired. Paul's lyrical saxophone and flute solos balance beautifully with Brandon's powerful trumpet. Sam's guitar work is superb and Jeff's bass playing is immaculate. Olman is a sensational drummer who locks down on the groove. What a great band!

WJN: How do you think your Jewishness has affected the music you make?

Kaufman: I grew up hearing my grandfather Chiel Morgenstein, of Blessed Memory, sing *nigunim* (sacred Jewish melodies). Those experiences had a profound impact on me. I realized the importance of learning my grandfather's favorite *nigun*, so that I could pass on that knowledge to the next generation. In the past several years, I've contributed to the soundtracks of two films, *The Pin* and *Cuba's Forgotten Jewels*, recording my grandfather's *nigun* for the first film and writing an original *nigun* for the second. This past year, I was invited to play percussion on an album of High Holiday melodies for Congregation Beth Ahm in West Bloomfield. I would love to do an album that reflects my interest in composing Jewish spiritual music. My music comes from my life experience. My Jewish path is a part of that. On *Firefly's Dream*, the music that I composed is rooted in my love of jazz and many world music traditions. I hope that my music will raise spirits, bring joy, and create connection. I am trying to bring *ohr* (light) into the *choshech* (darkness). I believe that music is so important in creating community and that as artists, we need to find ways of creating bridges with people of diverse backgrounds. We share one planet!

For more information, please visit kerrytownconcerthouse.com. ■

Cookout picnic series returns to the J

Rachael Hoffenblum, special to the WJN

Once a month throughout the summer, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor's Lunch Café heads outside for the annual Summer Cookout Picnic Series. Originally started in 2017, the cookouts have proved popular with all age groups. The cookout picnics return again this summer on the second Tuesday of each summer month at noon. The community is invited to enjoy the warm weather and a classic picnic lunch outdoors on the front patio at the Ann Arbor JCC. The picnics will be hosted on June 11, 2019, July 9, 2019, and August 13, 2019. Lunches must be reserved by noon the day prior by calling 971-0990.

Lunches are available for $5.50 for adults under age 60. Adults 60 and over may choose to pay a lower lunch fee thanks to funding provided by the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development. $3 is the suggested reduced price. No one 60 and over will be turned away for lack of funds. For more information contact the Ann Arbor JCC at (734) 971-0990. ■

EPF appoints new executive director

Special to the WJN

The Earth Preservation Fund (EPF), a non-profit organization supporting sustainability and environmental education, has hired Joe Pollak as executive director. The announcement is part of a plan to expand activities of the EPF which had previously operated as an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff. The announcement coincides with the EPF's 40th anniversary celebrated on Earth Day, April 22, 2019.

Joe Pollak's son Jacob helps plant a tree

"We're exceptionally pleased that Joe has taken on this leadership role. The timing is right to expand our operations," said EPF founder Dr. William Weber. "Environmental sustainability is the existential issue of our time. We must combat climate change and preserve biodiversity if we are to provide our children and grandchildren with an inhabitable planet. I'm proud of the work that the EPF has supported over the past 40 years, and look forward to the energy and new ideas that Joe will bring."

The EPF's Earth Day celebration included a weekend gathering attended by 40 supporters where the EPF's new executive director spoke about the history of the EPF. "The EPF's founders and first volunteers met at a planning meeting for the very first Earth Day celebration in 1970," said Pollak. "More work remains, but the EPF is committed to preserving the planet."

To mark the occasion, the EPF planted a tree at their headquarters in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and arranged for partner organizations to plant trees in the Kalimantan region of Borneo, the Usambara mountains in Tanzania, the Coretta Scott King Forest in northern Israel, and the Sacred Valley of Peru.

Pollak's background uniquely positions him to direct all of the EPF's operations, with significant experience as an environmental lawyer, non-profit manager, and higher education administrator. Pollak will develop a new strategic plan for the EPF which will include traveler involvement, fundraising, and expanding the organization's grants programs.

Pollak received his Juris Doctor and Bachelor of Arts degrees from the George Washington University and completed the Leading Change Practicum through the Organizational Learning department at the University of Michigan. His prior experience includes developing innovative academic programs for the University of Michigan Law School and practicing environmental law with an international law firm. He started his career and love of the outdoors as the assistant director of a Jewish summer camp.

Pollak began his duties as Executive Director in February. ■

Third Thursday Focuses on the Health-Sleep Connection

Rachael Hoffenblum, special to the WJN

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor's Third Thursday @ the J program will welcome Dr. Donovan T. Maust and Erica Soloway to discuss the results of the National Poll on Healthy Aging's 2017 report on sleep in their talk, *Trouble Sleeping? Don't assume it's a Normal Part of Aging* on Thursday, May 16, at noon. Maust is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Michigan Medical School. Soloway is an associate director of the National Poll on Healthy Aging. She also manages evaluation projects related to Medicaid through the University of Michigan Institute for Healthcare Policy & Innovation.

Erica Soloway **Dr. Donovan T. Maust**

Third Thursday @ the J presentations begin at noon and are free of charge and open to the public, however, advance registration is appreciated. Participants are welcome to bring their own dairy, nut-free lunch. Lunch is also available for purchase from the Lunch Café and must be reserved at least one day in advance. The menu is catered by local chef, Karan Balmer, and is available at jccannarbor.org. Anyone planning to purchase lunch must reserve it at by noon the previous day by calling (734) 971-0990. Lunches are made possible through support from the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) and lunch registrations forms must be completed prior to lunch to ensure that OCED receives the funding they require. Lunch registration forms are available at www.jccannarbor.org/lunch-cafe or at the J's Welcome Center.

For more information or to register for Third Thursday @ the J, learn more about Lunch Café, or for information on other programs, visit jccannarbor.org or call (734) 971-0990. ■

Celebrate Israel family festival highlights Jerusalem

Jessica Weil, special to the WJN

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, in partnership with the JCC of Greater Ann Arbor, presents the Celebrate Israel Family Festival, June 2, 3-6 p.m. The Jewish community will gather at the Jewish Community Center to celebrate the 71st anniversary of the State of Israel. This community-wide celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day) is a collaborative effort of over 10 Ann Arbor Jewish community organizations.

Celebrate Israel will be held, rain or shine. Because this year's event coincides with Jerusalem Day, activities will focus on Jerusalem The festival will include Israeli dancing, music, and will feature a trackless train, petting zoo, and interactive Israel-related booths with games and activities for all ages. No festival would be complete without food. Food from Chef Cari will offer plenty of falafel, and hummus. Nosh Pit offers wonderful vegan and vegetarian options! Don't forget to get a tasty treat from the Kona Ice truck as well!

Pre-registration for Celebrate Israel is highly recommended to avoid long lines to enter. The cost to attend the festival is $5 per person. Online registration is available through May 29. To register, visit jewishannarbor.org/israel71 or call 734-677-0100 ext 245.

Many more volunteers are needed to ensure Celebrate Israel is a big success. If you are interested in helping (free entry), please contact Jessica Weil at 734-585-5405 or jessica@jewishannarbor.org. ■

Chai Mitzvah ignites engagement!

Marci Sukenic, special to the WJN

Wine tasting, yoga, Shabbat dinner, Jewish parenting, social action, Israel discussion; these are just a few of the hot topics and activities engaging Chai Mitzvah participants. Groups are off the ground and rolling, but we still have plenty of room to join in and new groups are actively forming. There is a place for everyone. Cohorts of 8-12 people, ranging from young adult to seniors are getting together with like-minded folks to build community, engage in mitzvot, have meaningful discussion and to have fun. The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor is delighted to sponsor this program as participants have expressed their great desire to foster relationships and get involved!

Chai Mitzvah participants, Alicia Simon, Liora Rosen, Margaret Schreiber, Marci Sukenic, Lara Kross, and Alyse Tankanow participate in spring wine tasting at Morgan & York for the March theme of Passover

Chai Mitzvah participants Denise Fowley and Adam Leyton hosted a young adult group at their home. After graduating school, they were eager to get involved in something to further their Jewish life. Adam remarked, "The best part about Chai Mitzvah so far is that everyone in our group understands that Judaism means something different to each person. There's no judgment. There's no expectation. Our group feels very comfortable sharing our personal Jewish traditions and experiences and gathering new perspectives into what it means to be Jewish."

There's a place for everyone in Chai Mitzvah and we'd love to have you! Here's what you need to know. Chai Mitzvah is a year-long engagement program that meets one time per month. It is "book-group style," which means that each participant and group can make it fit with their own goals and objectives. Chai Mitzvah will guide you, through monthly themes and discussion packets, to explore what is meaningful to you about your Jewish life. Have we caught your interest? To get involved, please contact Chai Mitzvah Community Coordinator, Marci Sukenic, at marci@jewishannarbor.org or (734)677-0100, ext. 226. Chai Mitzvah ignites engagement! ■

HMC Hosts Annual Yom HaShoah Commemoration

The Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus will host its annual community-wide Yom HaShoah commemoration at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday May 5. The Holocaust Memorial Center is located at 28123 Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills.

Yom HaShoah, also known as Holocaust Remembrance Day, occurs every spring as a day of commemoration for victims of the Holocaust. The day is dedicated to remembering the millions of lives lost to Nazi persecution as well as reflecting on the courageous acts of those who resisted the brutal regime.

During the Holocaust Memorial Center's Yom HaShoah commemoration event, members of the community will speak and present readings. In addition, candles designed to remember and honor the six million Jews lost in the Holocaust will be lit by survivors and children of survivors in the community. Following the event, all who wish to light a memorial candle are invited to do so in the museum at the Eternal Flame.

This year's event is presented in cooperation with C.H.A.I.M. (Children of Holocaust Survivors Association in Michigan), Hidden Children and Child Survivors Association of Michigan, The Shaarit Haplaytah Organization and the Program for Holocaust Survivors and Families, a Service of Jewish Senior Life. The commemoration is generously supported by Sue and Sandy Birnholtz; Doris and Frederick Blechman; Marsha and Harry Eisenberg; Robin, Leo, Max, Anna and Louis Eisenberg; Marjory and Donald Epstein; Nancy and David Gad-Harf; Freda and Benjamin Gill; Nancy and James Grosfeld; Doreen Hermelin; Shirley and Edward H. Hirsh; David Horodoker Organization; Nancy and Joseph Jacobson; The Karp Family; Nina and Bernie Kent; Kosins Family Foundation; Karolyn and Arie Leibovitz; Donna and Michael Maddin; The Mendelson Family; Nucor; Denise and Peter Rodgers; Mindy and Bruce Ruben; Allegra Schwartz, Reina Brooks and Suzie Senor; Lisa and Gary Shiffman; The Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive; Sylvia and Hans Weinmann; Lori and Steven Weisberg; Gabriela and Walter z'l Weiss; Andi and Larry Wolfe; The Zekelman Family; and Cathleen Zepelin.

Complimentary valet parking will be available. For more information, call 248-556-3178 or send an email to events@holocaustcenter.org.

To further honor Holocaust victims, the Holocaust Memorial Center will host Unto Every Person There is a Name on Thursday May 2 from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Sunday May 5 from noon until 2:30 p.m. Unto Every Person There is a Name is a worldwide memorial initiative when volunteers come together to honor victims of the Holocaust by reciting their names. Volunteers can sign up to participate by visiting www.holocaustcenter.org/nam ■

JCLP student studies founding of JFS

By Ashley Schnaar

Walking through the hallways of the Jewish Family Services (JFS) of Washtenaw County, one sees mezuzahs on the doorframes of every office and paintings with Hebrew writing on the walls. With all the visible Judaica, one might be surprised to learn that only a fraction of the clientele and staff at Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County are Jewish. The history of the organization traces back to the development of senior programming, Jewish counseling, and Soviet Jewry resettlement in Ann Arbor. Between 1978 and 1994, the Soviet Jewry Absorption Committee (SJAC), an organization run out of Beth Israel, settled 120 families from the former Soviet Union.

The all-volunteer committee connected the families to housing and jobs and taught them English and Judaism. JFS was founded in 1993 as a small project of the newly formed Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. It initially began as a volunteer-run program, providing counseling services and educational programming. JFS' services have greatly expanded and its identity has morphed over the past 26 years. Under Anya Abramzon's leadership, JFS has grown beyond anything the organization's founders could have ever imagined and now serves 10,000 clients each year.

Over the past several months I have been working to create a detailed history of Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County. As preliminary research I read through *Washtenaw Jewish News* issues dating back to the 1960s, which provided great context to what the Ann Arbor Jewish community was like in those days. I also conducted interviews with several Ann Arbor community members who were instrumental to JFS' creation. The full paper can be accessed online through the following link: https://bit.ly/2TWx54R ■

Ashley Schnaar is a first year in the Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP) at the University of Michigan School of Social Work. She can be reached at schashle@umich.edu.

Joan Lowenstein tapped for national philanthropy board

Sharyn J. Gallatin, special to the WJN

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor is proud to announce the appointment of Joan Lowenstein to the Jewish Federation of North America's (JFNA) Women's Philanthropy Board. JFNA's Women's Philanthropy Board is a group of women leaders from across the country who are nominated by their local federations to serve on the national level.

Joan Lowenstein

"We are proud to have Joan representing us on the National Women's Philanthropy Board," said Federation executive director Eileen Freed. "It is fitting recognition of Joan's generosity and commitment to the local community as well as the leadership and vision she will be able to bring to this national body on our behalf."

Joan and her husband, Jonathan Trobe, moved to Ann Arbor from Miami, Florida in 1986. Joan has worked as an attorney since that time and now is of counsel with Jaffe, Raitt, Heuer & Weiss, PC, a Southfield law firm. She also taught as a lecturer at the University of Michigan and was a regular columnist for the Ann Arbor News, when it was a daily newspaper. Joan grew up in El Paso, Texas and Columbia, Missouri and her undergraduate degree is in journalism. She worked as a TV reporter in Oklahoma City before going to law school at the University of Florida. She learned Hebrew as a 6th grader during a year in Israel and also attended Hebrew University for a semester.

Locally, Joan served as Federation Board President from 2002 to 2004 and currently co-chairs the Cardozo Society, the Federation's affinity group for attorneys. Joan has been actively involved in city politics, serving on the Ann Arbor city council for 7 years, and currently as a board member of the Downtown Development Authority. She also sits on the boards of the Washtenaw Housing Alliance and the Main Street Area Business Improvement Zone. Joan and Jon have been supporters of the University Musical Society, Ann Arbor Symphony, and the Michigan Theater. Their children, Julian, Noah, Rebecca, and Dana are in New York, Ann Arbor, and Oakland, California.

As a member of JFNA's Women's Philanthropy Board, Joan will have the opportunity to learn from leaders across the country and will be in a unique position to bring that knowledge back to Ann Arbor, which will be used to invigorate our local Women's Philanthropy group. When asked how she felt about joining the National Women's Philanthropy Board, Joan said, "I look forward to learning about other communities and how we can make Ann Arbor's unique Jewish experience even better." ■

Pittsburgh and Parkland survivors help each other turn their grief into action

Mike Elk (JTA)

For many in this city's Jewish community, after suffering through a long winter following the Tree of Life synagogue massacre in October that killed 11 worshippers, the return of the professional baseball season has been a welcome mental health relief.

Before last Saturday's game between the hometown Pirates and the Cincinnati Reds, some of those affected by the shooting were honored on the field and cheered by tens of thousands of Pittsburghers in attendance.

"It's kinda like a bucket list [item], coming on the field," Sam Wedner, 62, said on the bright spring day from the PNC Park field. "Unfortunately I had to get here the way I did — with my wife being injured and my mother-in-law Rose Mallinger being killed. But for this minute it's a bucket list item."

The Pittsburgh delegation was joined on the field by others who are now helping them heal: Those affected by the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, in February 2018.

The ceremony was part of a series of events designed to help bring together those from the Jewish community in Pittsburgh and a delegation from Parkland, not all Jewish, to learn from one another. For Wedner, the visit of the Parkland delegation has helped him overcome his grief from the loss of his mother-in-law.

"Their efforts to work with the legislature have been inspiring and beyond whatever I consider that I could do," said Wedner, referring to Parkland activists who have pushed their local government to pass gun reform legislation. "They have inspired me, they have given a better attitude on how to approach the tragedy going forward."

Throughout last weekend, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh organized a number of events, both fun and educational, to help the two groups of survivors learn from each other as they struggle with their pain.

On Sunday afternoon at the JCC in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood (one of three locations under the greater Pittsburgh umbrella), just blocks from the Tree of Life, Parkland and Pittsburgh teens gathered in the auditorium to hear a DJ play hip-hop and munch on kosher pizza. It was part of a special version of J-Serve, an annual day of service for Jewish teens set up by BBYO, Repair the World, the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Foundation and others.

J-Serve has focused traditionally on getting thousands of young Jewish teens from cities across the country involved in community service. This year, after the Tree of Life shooting, the Pittsburgh JCC decided to add political advocacy engagement to the mix, training local teens on issues of gun control and immigration reform.

The move comes as a result of what J-Serve organizers in Pittsburgh see as an increased political awareness among high school students, particularly in the wake of the high-profile gun control protests inspired by Parkland teens last year.

"I think the teens in our community, many of them are really aware of what's going on in the world around them, they are very passionate about the issues that they care about and they are really motivated to make change now," said Hannah Kalson, the Pittsburgh JCC's director of teen and youth engagement. "They don't want to wait until they're older, they want to take action now, and they are organizing themselves."

In one JCC room in mid-April, teenagers from both communities sat and talked as they drew on yellow leaves and burgundy leaves — the former for Pittsburgh's black and gold and the latter for Parkland's school colors — to symbolize the interconnectedness of the tragedies that unfolded in their neighborhoods.

In a tense emotional session later in the day, the high schoolers shared strategies about how to talk about politics with those whom they disagree with, especially when they find themselves becoming emotional. One Parkland teen talked about how the school's students kept their cool while lobbying lawmakers — like memorizing talking points and role playing.

The lessons from the Parkland teens helped comfort several distraught-looking counterparts in the room.

"It hasn't been an easy time, and the process of responding to that is ongoing," Kalson said of the teenagers, many of whom knew people murdered in the Tree of Life shooting and lived in fear afterward that their synagogues might be attacked.

"It's only been a few months. So we are still in that space, which is one of the reasons that connecting with Parkland is so powerful because they are a little ahead of us on that road. They're holding out their hands and pulling us along," she said.

Some of the Pittsburgh students said meeting with the Parkland students was a transformative experience.

"It's really amazing that we can pull together and connect, and share stories and feelings, because we understand what each other are going through," one junior said at nearby Allderdice High School (the JCC did not want any of the teens' names used). "Seeing how strong they are and everything they have done after that is really inspiring."

As white supremacy continues to show up in the news and the possibility of more attacks looms, the Parkland students and Jewish residents in Squirrel Hill hope that they are building a model of how people can use tragedies to take collective action for political change.

"We are at different stages of grieving, but we will always be dealing with this, and it's important for them to understand that we are all in this together and to continue supporting one another," said Lizzie Eaton, a senior at Marjory Stoneman Douglas.

The increased political advocacy seems to have paid dividends already in Pittsburgh: On Tuesday, Mayor Bill Peduto signed into law landmark legislation that makes Pittsburgh the first city in the country with the legal authority to seize guns from individuals exhibiting "red flags" — that they may be willing to consider harm to themselves or others.

The National Rifle Association has already signaled that it intends to challenge the legislation, but pointing to Tree of Life survivor Dan Leger, Peduto said that he was inspired to take on the NRA by survivors like Leger speaking out.

"Change doesn't happen on its own. Change only happens when you challenge the status quo," Peduto said. "We have tried to get that change through Harrisburg, we have tried to get that change through Washington, and we have taken steps backward, not forward. So what we're saying is in communities across these states, in cities around this country, we will take action."

For local Jews, it felt like a moment of healing.

"We're still hurting," said Lynette Lederman, former president of the Tree of Life congregation and a staffer for City Councilman Corey O'Connor. "The personal trauma that me as former president of Tree of Life and my friends and the leadership of Tree of Life has experienced has kind of reached a watershed moment today." ■

Ann Arbor teens connect with their new home in Nahalal

Jessica Weil, special to the WJN

On March 21, fifteen Ann Arbor ninth-graders departed on a journey that was not a traditional spring break vacation, but instead an experience they will never forget. These teens were taking part in the ninth annual Ann Arbor-Nahalal Student Exchange program which has sent over 130 local students to Ann Arbor's Partnership community in Israel, Moshav Nahalal.

Living with host families, the teens spent ten days learning the history of Nahalal and the Jezreel Valley, experiencing Israeli high school, and visiting key sites in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Ethan White, a student at Skyline High School said, "It was a really eye-opening experience to go to Israel and just have all your preconceptions blown away. Everything there was totally new. The food, the people, the history. Everything."

Visiting the Western Wall in Jerusalem

Touring Nahalal

Some of the highlights from the trip included volunteering in Nahalal Elementary School's English class, touring Nahalal, participating in an outdoor cooking competition, and visiting the Herzl Museum in Jerusalem.

One of the most significant aspects of the trip was establishing close relationships with new friends and developing bonds with their "home in Israel." "Nahalal was one of the best, most memorable experiences of my life," said Lottie Winegarden, a student at Pioneer High School. "The thing that made this trip really special for me was the people. Everyone was so nice and we became family."

The group was accompanied by Jewish Federation Executive Director Eileen Freed and Federation's Outreach & Program Coordinator Jessica Weil.

The Ann Arbor/Nahalal Partnership is an integral part of the Michigan/Central Galilee Partnership 2Gether program, a partnership between the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, the Jewish Federa-

Continued next page

New social worker for Ann Arbor congregations

Sarah Hong, special to the WJN

Jewish Family Services is partnering with Beth Israel Congregation and Temple Beth Emeth to launch a new social worker position at the congregations. The "Congregation Social Worker for WISE Aging" will join the staffs of all three institutions and provide direct support and services to members of BIC and TBE. The social worker will be professionally supervised and supported by the expert team at JFS. Smaller Jewish congregations in the community may also utilize the services of this social worker with direct referrals from their clergy to JFS.

As adults age, they face new challenges and opportunities. Navigating resources for caregiving, accessing local, state and federal services and having sufficient support are all essential yet often require some outside help. Members of the Jewish community may seek this support at their synagogue yet the caring staff onsite may lack the detailed information and resource know-how required. Providing a referral and phone number may not be enough; often individuals need more support, contact, and hands-on help navigating systems and resources. All of this takes time and a specific set of skills as well as knowledge of resources and access points. Aging adults (or their loved ones) may not approach their clergy with these needs and instead tell themselves, "I'm not going to bother the rabbi with this." At the same time, some may be reluctant to approach JFS due to potential stigma or a sense that JFS services should only be reserved for the most financially needy. Many congregants would prefer exploring their needs with a staff person located in the more familiar temple context.

Marissa Quigg

Social worker Marissa Quigg has been hired for the position and began her work in the role in late March. While studying at the University of Michigan School of Social Work, Marissa was a Geriatric Scholar and interned with the UM Turner Senior Center. Since earning her MSW she has worked at the Rogel Cancer Center at Michigan Medicine providing support to adults and caregivers coping with cancer. Marissa's professional passion is assisting older adults and as a native of West Bloomfield, MI, she is excited to continue her work locally in Southeast Michigan.

Rabbi Josh Whinston of TBE and Rabbi Nadav Caine of BIC have worked closely with JFS leadership to conceive of and secure this opportunity for enhanced support for their congregants.

Rabbi Caine offers these thoughts about the project, "People often ask me who the "Levites" were – so much of the Torah is about them – and I tell them "Their role is to help people who have challenges coming to the Temple." Now we have our very own real-life Levite, noticing who's not coming as much or at all, and helping them with their challenges so they can be part of the community!"

Rabbi Whinston had this to say about the groundbreaking collaboration: "The hiring of our shared social worker, Marissa Quigg, is a wonderful moment for the Ann Arbor Jewish community. Marissa's hiring speaks volumes of our eagerness to work together for the common good of the Jewish community and our ability to think 'outside the box.' It is only with creative solutions to the realities of the moment that our Jewish community will move toward the future with strength and courage. With Marissa as a member of the staff at three institutions in our community, JFS, Beth Emeth, and Beth Israel, we will be able to care for more members of our community, helping ensure vitality of our members and our communal landscape. We hope that this model is replicable, not only in other parts of our Jewish community, but in other institutions as well."

This innovative program was enthusiastically supported for a two-year pilot by the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation (AAACF) which awarded generous funding to this project. Underscoring its deep commitment to the community's well-being, JFS is matching the AAACF funding in year one such that the two congregations realize zero costs in year one for this service. ■

Kabbalat Shabbat in Nahalal

tion of Metropolitan Detroit and the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids. Cooperative programs are developed with communities in Michigan and those of Nazareth Illit, Migdal Ha'Emek and the Regional Council of Emek Yizrael (Jezreel Valley).

The Israeli host teens will have their exchange visit to Ann Arbor this October, and the next Student Exchange visit to Nahalal will take place during the 2020 Ann Arbor Public Schools Spring Break. Current eighth graders interested in participating are encouraged to mark their family calendars now and contact Jessica Weil (jessica@jewishannarbor.org) for more information! ■

New support for caregivers

Roberta Hirshon, special to the WJN

In celebration of Older Americans Month, Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County (JFS) is pleased to introduce CARES, a program for caregivers who live in Washtenaw County and are caring for someone aged 60 and older. CARES stands for Caregiver Assessment Respite Education and Support and the JFS team notes there is also a "silent T" representing transportation services. Accessing these services is simple. Caregivers call JFS at 734-769-0209 and indicate they are seeking caregiver support to be transferred to a member of the CARES team. Questions and needs relating to caregiving will be handled with compassion and respect.

The CARES program offers assessments by phone, in-home or in-office at JFS to support the caregiver and the care recipient. This process identifies specific caregiving needs, caregiver strain, and tools to help improve the experience of caregiving. The assessment process allows the caregiver and the team to develop the right plan together. Follow up is a critical part of the CARES program.

CARES at JFS includes an innovative respite program offering caregivers 12 hours of no-cost respite care within a 90 day period. Respite is provided by JFS partner, Homewatch Caregivers, which offers an array of options from companion care to skilled care, depending on the need. Volunteers will also play an integral role in the CARES program as JFS is establishing a volunteer-staffed respite program, beginning in the fall of 2019. More information will follow this summer regarding how volunteers can get involved in this meaningful opportunity.

Other exciting CARES programming includes "Caregiver Conversations," a support group which meets monthly at various locations in the Ann Arbor area. In a relaxed and comfortable setting, caregivers attending the group have the opportunity to enjoy pastries and coffee while sharing their stories with others. This unique and supportive group is facilitated by a licensed clinical social worker who is there to help.

Support is also provided through CARES' unique Caregiver Consultation offering. Caregiver Consultations, an individual and family counseling program, caters to the specific needs of caregivers. Participants meet with a licensed clinical social worker who is skilled in in the area of caregiving issues. Caregiver Consultations may be insurance reimbursable, depending on your policy. Additional services available to caregivers include low cost transportation to appointments, shopping and other destinations, and a volunteer accompaniment program known as Partners in Care Concierge (PICC). A 5-week no-cost education program for caregivers is also planned for fall 2019, with details coming soon.

JFS Director of Programs and Outreach, Sarah Hong, had this to say about the new CARES program: "JFS recognizes that while meaningful, caregiving can also be challenging, isolating, exhausting, and lonely. Those who are doing the job often do not know where to turn when they need support. With the launch of CARES, JFS can better support and celebrate those who care for others." The CARES program at JFS is currently accepting new participants and those interested in learning more about the array of available services are encouraged to call JFS at 734-769-0209. ■

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Watching the matzah at Kfar Chabad

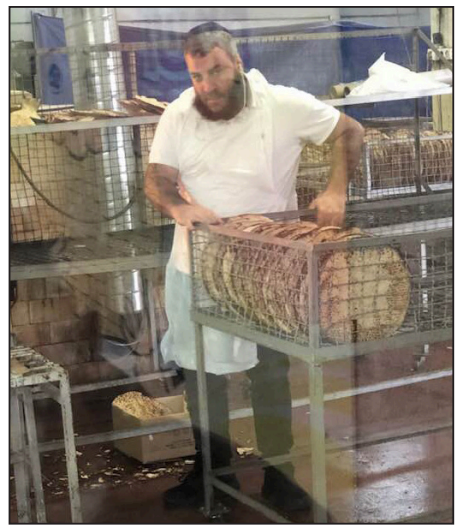
by Shifra Epstein

Last March, I made my first visit to the village of Kfar Chabad, five miles southeast of Tel Aviv. Kfar Chabad was founded in 1949 on what was the pre-1948 Arab village Safiriyya. The first Jewish inhabitants of Kfar Chabad were mostly recent immigrants from the Soviet Union, survivors of World War II and Stalinist rule. The village was founded at the behest of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn (1880-1950), the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe. The Rebbe supported the village both spiritually and financially. Today, the farming village has close to 7,000 members and numerous educational institutions.

Kfar Chabad is famous for being home to the largest factory for handmade round "shmurah matzot." The matzah is called "shmurah," or "watched," because the wheat is under strict supervision from the time of harvest to the baking.

The bakery, which started in a small deserted house that had once belonged to an Arab family, has since moved to a larger building. The idea of the revival of the handmade shmurah matzah was that of Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson (1902-1994), the seventh Lubavitcher Rebbe. As early as 1954, the Rebbe started encouraging his followers to eat shmurah matzah. He also encouraged them to distribute it to every Jew they met and to teach them about its significance. The bakery is open from the Jewish High Holidays in the fall until Passover in the spring. It employs over 50 male workers and the bakery takes on extra staff and volunteers the closer it gets to Passover.

Visitors enter the bakery through a side door where there is a long hallway with observation windows. When I visited the bakery, two



months before Passover, it was very busy. There were more than twenty male workers dressed with blue double sided aprons with the name "Kfar Chabad Bakery" printed on both sides. A few had their hair covered. Above each window, a colorful cartoon shows children going through each phase of the matzah making process. On the other side of the glass is the bakery itself, where more than ten men work on the different phases of preparing matzah.

According to Jewish law, 18 minutes are allowed from the time the flour and water make contact to the time the matzah comes out of the oven. In the Chabad Bakery, the matzah is made in less than 18 minutes, entirely by hand, including the kneading, rolling out, the punching of small holes and baking – without the use of modern mechanical or electronic instruments. Only hands. Every 18 minutes the men stop

their work to change their aprons, wash their hands, put on fresh gloves and clean off tables to prepare for the next batch.

In the first room, one man measures hand ground flour and pours it through a small opening in the wall into a vat in the next room. The flour is isolated to prevent all contact with moisture until absolutely necessary. It's kept dry from the moment it's harvested to the second it comes in contact with water in the factory's mixing bin. The water that is mixed with the wheat is also guarded and, when mixed with the wheat to form a dough. The dough must be completely and evenly flat when kneaded.

After the dough is kneaded, cut, and rolled into flat disks, it is run through a roller, poking holes through the dough to make sure it does not rise when put in the brick oven. The dough is laid over wooden poles and flipped onto the floor of the oven for less than a minute before being taken out and inspected. The matzahs are then arranged on a wire shelf unit to cool off and be packed.

The round shape of the matzah shmurah is important because it takes less time to produce than the square shaped matzah. At the Chabad Bakery, the average production time is 12 to 13 minutes. Anything more than that is considered hametz (leavened) and tossed in the trash.

Not far from the bakery, a full-fledged Visitors' Center was added. It includes a model bakery where kids, religious and secular alike, can practice making matzot on their own. Known as Matzah LeTalmid, "Matzah School," a trip to the bakery has become de rigueur for middle- and elementary-school-age children—and even preschoolers—from across the country.

Kfar Chabad also features a full-scale replica of "770," the Chabad headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway, Crown Heights, Brooklyn, New York. For a virtual tour of Kfar Chabad and a guide to the main tourist attractions, see https://kfar-chabad.com/info. ■

What I wish other Jews new about Romani Jews

Words and art by Sarah Elizabeth Hartman (ALMA via JTA)

"You mean Romanian?"
"Oh, so like a g*psy."
"You don't look like a g*psy."
"So your family converted?"

I have heard these four things over and over again, so many times that they've ceased to become words; now, they're just… irritation.

Hi. I'm a Romani Jew. No, I'm not Romanian. Romanian people actually enslaved my people for centuries, until Roma, empowered by news of the liberation of slaves in the U.S., fought back. The word g*psy is loaded with so many negative stereotypes, and if I never hear another white girl call herself one again, it'll be too soon. I don't steal. I'm educated. Yes, I'm poor. (But again, I don't steal.) And my family has been Jewish for as long as we can trace it — so yes, we are Jews, thank you very much. But if we were converts, you would still warrant a dirty look for saying it like that.

I see a lot of ignorance in the world about who Roma are, and in America, it's common: We're an invisible minority here, for the most part, which is something we cherish after centuries of horrifying treatment in Europe and the Middle East. The saddest thing, though, is how excluded I feel in the Jewish community. At best, I'm an exotic novelty. At worst, I'm "not a real Jew" because my liturgy and cuisine doesn't align with Shlomo Carlebach and gefilte fish.

The funny thing about being a Romani Jew is

that there isn't one way to do it. If you think Jews have opinions, just wait till you meet a Romani one. Our customs vary wildly, thanks to centuries in diaspora on top of another diaspora. Every holiday, no matter how small, is prepared for with a cleaning frenzy, and followed with a feast and plentiful music and dancing. Even typically somber holidays are experienced with song and dance and bright-colored clothes. Modesty of dress for women is still suggested to an embarrassing extent; wearing shorts is still practically criminal. Our languages, a mixed breed of the different dialects we've collected, are a kind of Tower of Babel under which we sit. Our food is a journey paralleling our own, with my family devouring saffron-infused challah, spicy goulash rather than cholent, and ginger-blasted chai as our Jewish penicillin. But our dancing, our music, and our desire to keep our homes obscenely clean unite us.

And that's another thing: Keeping kosher got nothin' on our mothers, who practice removing anything mahrime, or "unclean," in the broadest sense. For all that we've been called "dirty g*psies," we're likely the cleanest people you'll ever meet.

I can't tell you when Romani Jews became Jews. The idea is that, because we're originally from Northwest India, we must have converted somewhere along the way. I'm not so sure, because it's not like India is that far from Israel — certainly closer than Germany. So why Jews aggressively litigate the genetic legitimacy of Romani Jews is beyond me.

Yes, I've taken a DNA ancestry test, and no, they don't test for Romani heritage. My DNA is almost entirely Indian and Nepalese, with a smattering of Siberian and various countries in the Middle East. Some Romani are the same. Some have different results. Likely because we are a diasporic people. Just as other Jews range from delicate, wispy blonde hair to thick 3C curls, Roma are not one singular look or genetic pattern. In short: People sleep around. So when you say someone "doesn't look Romani," it's like looking up and saying, "that doesn't look like the sky." Tragically, we do not all look like Rita Hayworth. Oh yeah, she was Romani, too.

I'm answering these questions in part to vent, but mostly because they're the questions Jews always — usually earnestly — ask when I tell them what I am. My hope is that once you can understand who we are, you can start focusing on actual allyship within the Jewish community, like acknowledging that however horrific things are right now for Jews in Europe, I can assure you they're worse for Romani. For Romani Jews, it's a two-for-one special: anti-Semitism and anti-Romanyism for one low price! We struggle in both Europe and America with housing loss, a lack of employment, denial of access to healthcare, and public education. And, of course, white nationalists (they're everywhere).

Unlike many Jews in America, I don't carry any mark of financial privilege whatsoever. I have never in my life lived in a house that was owned and not rented. I've been homeless three times. I commute three hours a day to work because I can't afford to live any closer. For all the romanticism of our supposed lifestyle, Roma mostly just want what most people want: stability.

Stability should start at home and, once outside the door? With our fellow Jews. ■

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Jewish Film Festival continued from page 1

Clara Silver, special to the WJN

tray the two sisters in the film.

Sunday, May 12, is the opening of the AAJFF with a full day of films. The second co-sponsored film, *To Dust*, plays at 12:30 p.m. at the State Theater. Shmuel (Géza Röhrig) is a Hasidic cantor who struggles to find religious solace for his wife's untimely death. He secretly obsesses over how his wife's body will decay, which leads him to ask for help from a community college biology professor (Matthew Broderick), who reluctantly agrees. The dark subject matter becomes a darkly-comedic, sick-but-sweet story of an unlikely odd couple. Cinetopia will host two additional screening of this film on May 17, at Cinema Detroit at 6:30 p.m., and on May 18, at Angell Hall at 7:15 p.m.

Continuing on Sunday at 5:00 p.m., the AAJFF returns to the Michigan Theater for its official opening film, *93 Queen.* In one of the largest Hasidic enclaves in the United States, Borough Park, Brooklyn, we follow a group of tenacious Hasidic women who are smashing the patriarchy in their community by creating the first all-female volunteer ambulance corps in New York City. Led by Ruchie, a lawyer and mother of six, the women attempt to balance their faith with their nascent feminism while being confronted with the patriarchal attitudes that dominate Hasidic society.

Sunday concludes with *Budapest Noir* at 8:00 p.m. Filmed in the film noir tradition, this murder mystery is set in Budapest 1936, just as Hungary was preparing to align itself with Hitler. A beautiful young woman is found dead and no one wants to investigate, except Zsigmond Gordon, a jaded reporter who has a gut feeling that things are not what they seem. The investigation leads him into the city's shady world of pornographers, fixers, boxing rings, seedy brothels, and crime syndicates. This film is intended for mature audiences.

Monday, May 13, opens at 2:00 p.m. with the screening of *The Unorthodox*. Based on true events, the film opens in 1983 where we are introduced to Yaakov Cohen, the owner of a Jerusalem printing press who is tired of being pushed around. He was born with the wrong family name, a Sephardi name to be specific, which means he and his family suffer discrimination in an Ashkenazi dominated society. In a moment's turnabout, he decides to establish a Sephardic Ultra-Orthodox political party, known now as Shas.

Later, at 6:45 p.m., the intriguing documentary *Why The Jews?* raises the taboo question about why the Jews have such a list of stunning accomplishments. How do they do it? Some of today's prominent thinkers tackle this mystery which is shrouded in ignorance and prejudice. They tear back the curtain and draw a startling link between a people's achievements and the darkest hours in its history.

Tuesday, May 14, starts with *The Samuel Project,* starring Hal Linden, at 5:00 p.m. This is the story of Eli, an outcast teen, who connects with his isolated grandfather Samuel for the first time, and uncovers his surprising past when he makes his grandpa the subject of an animated art project for school.

Later that evening at 7:30, AAJFF joins forces with Cinetopia once again, featuring a live musical performance accompanying the silent film, *The Ancient Law*. Alicia Svigals and Donald Sosin, composer/musicians renowned worldwide for their live silent film accompaniments, have collaborated on a new musical score for this newly uncovered masterpiece. The film begins in the mid-1800s in Galicia. Baruch, the son of a rabbi, yearns to become an actor. Against his father's will, he leaves the Eastern European shtetl where he grew up and joins a travelling theatre troupe. Austrian Archduchess Elisabeth Theresia falls in love with the young man and arranges for him to join Vienna's Burg Theatre, where he rises to become a celebrated star. With its complex portrayal of tradition and emancipation, E.A. Dupont's period film marks a highpoint of Jewish filmmaking in Germany.

Wednesday, May 15, at 5:00 p.m. will feature a special Ann Arbor connection. The film *Remember Baghdad* is the too little known story of Iraqi Jews. After 2,600 years of living peacefully in the area, the community vanishes in one generation. With vivid testimony, home movies, and news archive footage from Iraq, the film follows the lives of four families. Guest speaker, Levana Aronson, an instructor of Hebrew at the University of Michigan, is related to one of the families in the film and will host a question and answer session after the screening.

At 8:00 p.m. the moving film *Shoelaces* will be screened. Nominated for eight Israeli Academy Awards including Best Film, *Shoelaces* is a wholly engaging, tender family dramedy about the knotty relationship between an aging, irascible mechanic and the exuberant special-needs son he abandoned long before. Finding his father in need of a kidney transplant, Gadi volunteers only to be denied by the transplant committee. He sets out to fight for his right to save his father's life.

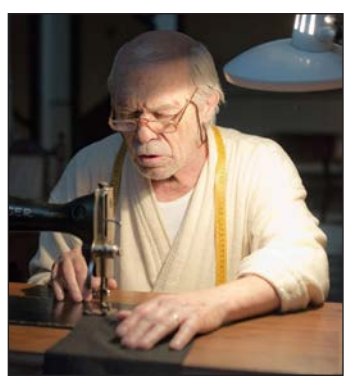
The last evening of the festival, Thursday, May 16, at 5:00 p.m., the popular Shorts Program returns. Among the six short films being shown is *Boxes*, a film produced by Shira Stein, who grew up in Ann Arbor. The final short, *A Night in The Garden*, is only 5 minutes long and one of the most powerful pieces of film in the festival.

The closing film at 8:00 p.m. is *The Last Suit*. An aging Jewish tailor leaves his life in Argentina to embark on a journey back through time and halfway around the world, in this bittersweet film.

Eighty-eight-year-old Holocaust survivor Abraham Bursztein is about to be put out to pasture by his children. Refusing to bow to family pressure, he sets off on an adventure from which he doesn't expect to return. Fueled by a sense of duty, and a quest for closure, Abraham decides that the moment has come to fulfill a promise and seek out an old friend. With assistance from a cast of kindly strangers, the sharply-dressed suit maker travels by train across Europe from Spain to Poland, in search of the man who saved him from certain death.

Individual film tickets are $12/ticket for Michigan Theater members and $15/ticket for non-Michigan Theater members. Cinetopia also offers a four-pack of individual tickets for the discounted price of $35 for Michigan Theater members and $45 for non-Michigan Theater members. Information on ticket options is available by visiting cinetopiafestival.org/tickets-passes/ and sponsorship information can be found at film.jccannarbor.org. Sponsorship includes entrance to all films and the sponsor dinner on Monday, May 13, at 4:45 p.m. Seating for films is on a first come first served basis and there will be no reserved seating. The full AAJFF schedule and information is also available at film.jccannarbor.org.

Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor presents the annual AAJFF, which is its largest cultural event each year. The festival is designed to make the Jewish global experience accessible to the broader community through the medium of film. There is a significant cost to present the festival, which is offset by the support of many individuals and community organizations. For more information on the AAJFF or becoming a supporter, contact Karen Freedland, director of Jewish cultural arts and education for the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, at karenfreedland@jccannarbor.org or (734) 971-0990. ■



cinetopia FILM FESTIVAL

MAY 10 - 19, 2019

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MAY 11 7:00 PM
MICHIGAN THEATER

FRAMING JOHN DELOREAN

Who was the real John DeLorean? To some, he was a visionary who revolutionized the automobile industry. To others, he was a con man. Stars **ALEC BALDWIN**. *Documentary. USA. NR. 109 min. English.*

FOLLOWED BY A LIVE Q&A WITH PRODUCER, TAMIR ARDON AND A CHANCE TO TAKE A PICTURE WITH A DELOREAN!

Sponsored by Rishi & Alison Narayen.

MAY 13 3:15 PM
STATE THEATRE

LETO

A love triangle emerges around a rock and roll musician, his protege, and his wife in 1980s Russia. *Drama. Russia. NR. 126 min. Russian with English subtitles.*

FOLLOWED BY A LIVE Q&A WITH WRITER AND U-M ALUM, MICHAEL IDOV!

MAY 11 3:30 PM
STATE THEATRE

THE FAREWELL

A Chinese family discover their grandmother has only a short time left to live, and instead of telling her, they plan a wedding to gather the family together before she passes. Stars **AWKWAFINA**. *Drama. USA. NR. 98 min. English and Mandarin with English subtitles*

Sponsored by Anne Baird (in memory of Hans C. Cozak).

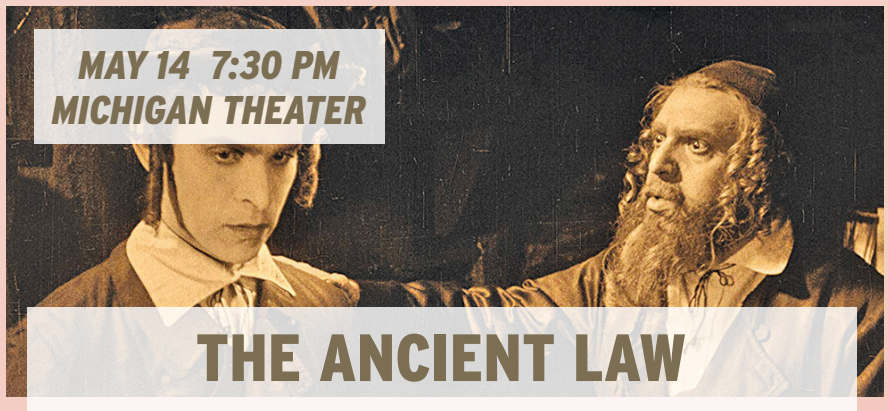
MAY 11 1:00 PM
STATE THEATRE

MAY 14 4:30 PM
STATE THEATRE

STYX

A German woman on a solo sailing voyage comes upon a sinking boat of refugees in this taut moral thriller. *Thriller. Germany. NR. 94 min. English and German with English subtitles.*

Sponsored by UM Weiser Center for Europe & Eurasia.



MAY 14 7:30 PM
MICHIGAN THEATER

THE ANCIENT LAW

JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL SELECTION!
German silent drama film directed by E.A. Dupon about the son of an Orthodox Rabbi, who faces hostility from his father when he decides to become an actor. *Drama. Germany. NR. 135 min. German with English intertitles.*

Sponsored by U-M Weiser Center for Europe & Eurasia.

MAY 12 8:00 PM
MICHIGAN THEATER

BUDAPEST NOIR

JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL SELECTION! In Budapest in 1936, a girl is found dead and no one seems to want to investigate - except a reporter who has a gut feeling that things are not what they seem. *Thriller/Mystery. Hungary. NR. 95 min. Hungarian with English subtitless.*

Sponsored by UM Weiser Center for Europe & Eurasia.

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Offerings

Rabbi Ora Nitkin-Kaner, special to the WJN

Rabbi Ora Nitkin-Kaner

Counting the omer, the 49 days between the first seder and Shavuot, is an exercise in noticing: noticing changes in the physical world as spring blossoms; noticing how we change, day by day; and noticing what offerings ('omer') we can make of the small moments of our lives.

Sonnets to Orpheus, Part Two, XII

Rainer Maria Rilke

Want the change. Be inspired by the flame
where everything shines as it disappears.
The artist, when sketching, loves nothing so much
as the curve of the body as it turns away.

What locks itself in sameness has congealed.
Is it safer to be gray and numb?
What turns hard becomes rigid
and is easily shattered.

Pour yourself out like a fountain.
Flow into the knowledge that what you are seeking
finishes often at the start, and, with ending, begins.

Every happiness is the child of a separation
it did not think it could survive.
And Daphne, becoming
a laurel,
dares you to become the wind.

(from In Praise of Mortality, translated and edited by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy)

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Even weddings have politics

Rabbi Robert Levy, special to the WJN

Recently, I participated in a triple wedding held at Washington Hebrew Congregation. The three couples were all Israelis denied the right to marry in their own countries. Well, that is not quite true. They could marry within their imposed religious affiliation, to a person of the opposite sex in a ceremony officiated by state-sanctioned clergy. For two Reform Jews who identify as a man and a woman (and for whom that identity is in agreement with the status imposed by the state) that would mean the rabbi would need to be an Orthodox rabbi salaried by the state. And they are more fortunate than couples of two different faith groups and/or couples who identify as LBTGQ. These simply may not marry in Israel.

Rabbi Robert Levy

I attended tonight for two reasons: First, to participate in this public statement about marriage discrimination in Israel (this triple wedding was held during the AIPAC policy conference also in Washington DC). Second, I attended at the request of my congregation in Florence. In Italy, the situation is surprisingly similar to Israel, though there is the open option of a non-religious civil wedding, an option that does not exist for most Israelis. For cisgendered born Jews or Jews by (Orthodox) choice, who seek a Jewish wedding only an Orthodox rabbi approved by the Orthodox authorities may conduct the service. Italy, like Israel, has a theocratic understanding of laws of personal status and the Italian government has a deal with the Orthodox authorities to provide for all Jews as they see fit. We are fighting this and may ultimately need to appeal to the European Court of Human Rights. But we will win, because good will prevail. Italy has no commitment forcing all Jews to behave like Orthodox Jews. The same cannot be said for Israel.

In Israel we will only win if the Orthodox are put in their proper place, as the rightful authorities for the Orthodox community and only the Orthodox community. Unfortunately for non-Orthodox Jews, the Orthodox hold a block of votes in the K'nesset that are sold to the governing coalition in exchange for financial support of Orthodox institutions and control of all laws of personal status as they relate to Jews. The chances of real change are remote at present, as remote or more remote than they were in 1947.

We might excuse this as an aspect of the struggle for survival of Israel. Sadly, that is a 1950s and 1960s argument. Today Israel is a modern nation. The Orthodox establishment is not an aspect of 21st century Israel. Its value resides in trading shekels and control for coalition votes. Politics needs to catch up with other modern facets of Israeli life and culture.

This is not about my support for Israel. Quite the contrary, it is about my deeply rooted support for her. This is about basic human and religious rights denied to non-Orthodox Jews and other citizens of Israel. It is a *shanda* before us, that the country where almost one half of world Jewry live rejects freedom of religion. And while I appreciate your reading of this message as I appreciated the chance to attend the triple wedding, neither your reading or my attendance or even continuous political action will soon end this acceptance of injustice and denial of human rights. But someday, I pray.

And the weddings were wonderful. Very ordinary and exceptionally unique. Humor, seriousness and purpose and love, gobs of precious love. The couples sharing the truth of their love brought our gathered community together in a shared righteous joy. Mazal Tov! ■

Run to Greet the Strangers

Rabbi Josh Whinston

One of my favorite Talmudic sayings comes from tractate Shabbat 127a. In a discussion of welcoming guests we read, "Rav Yehuda said that Rav said on a related note: Hospitality toward guests is greater than receiving the Divine Presence, as when Abraham invited his guests it is written: "And he said: Lords, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please pass not from Your servant"(Genesis 18:3). In these few lines, we come to understand that Abraham, who was engaged in conversation with God before the three messengers arrived, leaps to his feet and runs out to greet these strangers. Rav Yehuda and Rav make a radical statement and even though I have read it many times, it still gives me chills. I have come to understand this bit of Talmudic wisdom in this way: when we run out to the stranger, when we seek those people out; it's not that it's more important than the Divine Presence, but that we honor God as well when we do this. With this in mind, I boarded a plane on March 18, to fly to Honduras.

Alongside about 75 other participants, I journeyed to Honduras on a trip called "Roots of the Migration." We didn't go to Honduras to build schools, latrines, or engage in any direct service initiative. We went to Honduras, as the name of the trip implies, to try and understand what causes migration north. We wanted to hear from activists on the ground why migrants feel the need to leave and what the conditions are like to prime young and old to trek 2,000 miles by foot or bus to our southern border. Once we acclimated for a night, we headed out to local communities, and my bus made its way to a small village called La Presa in the Santa Barbara region of Honduras, along the border of Guatemala.

La Presa sits on a river and is only accessible by small cars on a dirt road or via a hanging footbridge. We walked across the swinging bridge with our bags in hand and backpacks strapped to our backs. As we crossed, we saw the entire town (about 80 families) gathered at the other end of the bridge, awaiting our arrival. They set off homemade fireworks and played music as they received us. The hospitality continued as town leaders made short speeches. Eventually, we were guided to their Catholic church and served the lightest, fluffiest tamales I've ever eaten.

Hondurus

Later that evening, all the participants were divided into pairs and we walked with our host for a night of home hospitality. My host, Miguel, was a 78-year-old man, his hair perfectly coifed and his beige guayabera shirt without one wrinkle. He walked us to his adobe house where he lived with his son, daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren. His son's family all shared one room and Miguel had his own room. Even after trying to persuade him otherwise, Miguel insisted on giving us his bed and sleeping on the concrete floor of his house.

Chickens and baby chicks ran between our feet as Miguel showed us his backyard with various fruit trees that supplied much of his family's food. He also showed us the kitchen, which was outside, also in the backyard. The kitchen sat next to a backyard latrine and shower. Though they live in significant poverty, the people of La Presa seemed to all have running water and electricity. These two things looked like the only luxury in the town.

While in La Presa, we learned that most of the men work at the sugarcane factory just a mile or two away from the village. We learned they make $1,500 over the four-month season and that that money is their income for the entire year. We learned that there are almost no workplace protections and if they raise their voices about working conditions, they will be immediately fired. The factory only employs young men, as older men are more likely to stand up for themselves.

Learning about the conditions in La Presa was contextually important, but the real reason we were there was to understand what was happening with their river. For over a decade, the people of La Presa have fought the building of a hydroelectric dam upriver from their village. They have protested, reached out to local government, and done whatever they could to ensure the dam was not built. The La Presa community will be wiped out if the dam is built—the river they depend on for food, water, and recreation will become a trickle of what it once was, and a potential flooding hazard during storms as water is released from the intended reservoir.

Those of us who are climate minded might make the leap to believe hydroelectric dams are good. In many cases, they are. But for the people of La Presa and other communities in Honduras, hydroelectric dams represent an end to their way of life. If and when they protest the dams, they face potential arrest and threats to their lives. Several community leaders were killed in the last decade opposing the pillaging of the land for its natural resources. In most cases, when dams are built, the communities displaced or adversely affected in other ways see none of the economic benefits that should come along with development. The promises the electric companies make are never realized, and jobs don't materialize.

Returning from Honduras, I'm left with a few realizations. The people in Honduras working against hydroelectric dams and the stripping of natural resources see themselves on the frontlines of climate change. They understand that what happens in Honduras impacts our earth system and that the degradation of land is more than a local issue. They also understand that American foreign policy contributes to their conditions. They know when our government sends military assistance to fight gang violence that some of the assistance is used to terrorize the peaceful population as well. When dams are built, and gold mines dug, the military arrives and the people's voices are silenced.

The roots of the migration are clear: our government supports an illegitimate Honduran government that perpetuates an atmosphere of abuse of indigenous populations and the poor in Honduras. When threats against life are made, people leave and head north. Leaving Honduras, this much was clear to me: we are a part of the system that perpetuates migration.

Therefore, when people do show up at our doorstep, we have an even greater obligation to run out to them, welcome them in, and offer compassion and assistance. This is our obligation as Jews. ■

Chabad offers class on Jewish spiritual worship

Special to the WJN

This May, Rabbi Aharon Goldstein of Chabad House in Ann Arbor MI will offer "With All My Heart," a new six-session course by the acclaimed Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) that will examine the Jewish art of prayer and spiritual experience.

Beginning Wednesday, May 22, at 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m., participants in the course will study the history and philosophy of Jewish worship, seeking to discover the deep, elegant structure embedded within the Jewish prayer book and within Judaism's ancient synagogue traditions.

"Responsibilities pull us in so many directions that we seldom get a chance to reflect on our lives, our mission in this world, what's true, and what really matters to us," Rabbi Goldstein of Chabad House, the local JLI instructor in Ann Arbor told the WJN. "Even much of religion seems to have become routine and devoid of heartfelt feeling and spirituality. This course is out to debunk that notion and reclaim the 'spirit' within spiritual practice."

According to JLI's website, the course promises to "outline profound Jewish prayer techniques that lend wings to our emotions and words to our yearnings, allowing us to communicate with something much larger than ourselves, and feel comfort and shelter within a reality that's more whole, more intense, more real, and more beautiful."

"We tend to turn to prayer when we're out of options, seeking some kind of magical intervention when we're having trouble dealing with what life throws our way," explained Rabbi Zalman Abraham, of JLI's Brooklyn headquarters. "Prayer is meant to be so much more than that. It's a way to relieve stress; find focus, clarity, and connection to a raw and vulnerable place deep within us; or even just to start each day from a positive, humble, and grateful frame of mind."

"With All My Heart" explores questions such as: What is Jewish prayer? How do we achieve intimacy with G-d? What is the mystical meaning, power, and impact of our prayers? If prayer is a journey, what is its destination? And how do we practice focused mindfulness while engaging in our day-to-day responsibilities?

Rabbi Laibl Wolf, founder and dean of Spiritgrow and author of *Practical Kabbalah*, commented about the course, "Talking to G-d, or discovering the deeper self, is not taught or experienced by most Jews in a lifetime. It is therefore heroic of JLI to tackle this gap and bridge it with an excellent course that includes experiential elements like meditation."

Like all JLI programs, this course is designed to appeal to people at all levels of knowledge, including those without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning. All JLI courses are open to the public, and attendees need not be affiliated with a particular synagogue, temple, or other house of worship.

JLI, the adult education branch of Chabad-Lubavitch, offers programs in more than 800 locations in the U.S. and in numerous foreign countries, including Argentina, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Panama, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, and Venezuela. More than 400,000 students have attended JLI classes since the organization was founded in 1998.

Interested students may call 734-995-3276 x 2 or visit www.myJLI.com for registration and for other course-related information. ! ■

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Living true to our mission

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, special to the WJN

The first Shabbat of May, May 4, we read in the Torah about the procedures that the high priest is required to follow in order to perform the services and to enter the Holy of Holies on the day of Yom Kippur. The Kohen (high priest) is told that he should not enter into the Holy of Holies except to perform specific services at specifically designated times. In other words, there are set times when he is supposed to go into the holiest place in the Holy Temple. This directive comes as a result of the episode of the two sons of Aharon entering the Holy of Holies on Rosh Chodesh Nissan, on their own volition, and passing away as a result. God subsequently gives two commandments in order to prevent another such tragedy as the passing away of Aharon's sons Nadav and Avihu.

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein

One commandment is written In the parshah of Shimini in which we're told of the passing of Aharon's two sons, Nadav and Avihu. God tells Aharon directly that he should not drink any wine or other alcoholic beverage before entering the Holy chambers to perform the services there.

The second command is in this week's reading, on May 4, where God tells Moshe Rabbeinu that he should command Aharon not to enter the Holy of Holies at any time other than those times specifically designated by God's commands. These two commandments should prevent a tragedy like the one previously mentioned with Aharon's sons.

It is known that the sons of Aharon were holy people. Not only were they holy but Moshe said to Aharon, "Now we see that they are holier than us." It is written that God will sanctify the Holy Temple with the holy ones. Who were the holy ones? The sons of Aharon were the holy ones.

Even though they were, spiritually, even greater than Moshe and Aharon, what they did was considered a sin. They allowed themselves to get drawn into the holiness of the inner chamber of the Holy Temple to such an extent that their souls left their bodies. This is something very high on the spiritual realm – that one allows the soul to get very close to God – what could be greater than that? Nevertheless, it is considered a sin because God's will is that a person should be here on Earth in order to fulfill and complete our divine mission in this world. Voluntarily expiring and leaving this world is not acceptable and is in contradiction to God's plan. So to prevent this from happening again we were given these two commandments concerning the proper use of the holy chambers and the Holy of Holies chambers – not to be drunk, and only to enter at the prescribed times.

The lesson that we learn from this is that these two commandments speak to people on two opposite ends of why they might want to leave this world. One would be a person who dedicates their whole life to studying Torah and to the service of God. At some point it can happen that they will feel so limited by the physicality of this world that they feel prevented from getting closer to God. This might cause them to have a feeling of wanting to leave this world in order to get closer to God. This is the category of Nadav and Avihu.

Then there is the exact opposite situation. There can be a Jew whose livelihood requires a complete involvement in the physical world. At some point they can become embittered and dissatisfied with their lot in life and all its low level entanglements with the physical world. They could say that they want to leave this world because there is no time or space for spiritual pursuits – it is so low that it becomes intolerable. They want the soul to leave their body. This thinking is completely incorrect! This person's heavy involvement in worldly affairs is their unique purpose.

So why does God command the Kohen to be sober during the service? Wine is supposed to represent the secrets of the Torah. As we can observe when a person drinks wine, it causes them to say and reveal things from inside of themselves that they would not normally share. This is the nature of wine – to bring out the hidden. So the Kohen is warned not to go so deep into the sublime secrets of the Torah that you would wish to leave this physical world for the spiritual ecstasies. Don't get drunk and run away from the reality that you were born into this physical world for a purpose. Stay here and work on your mission in this physical plane of existence! Your creator created you as a physical being for a reason. If your destiny was purely spiritual, you would have been created as an angel.

On the other hand, regarding those that occupy themselves in the activities of the physical world, the second commandment regarding the proper timing of worship applies. For example, when the Torah speaks about Yom Kippur. If a person were in shul on Yom Kippur, not engaging in their usual involvement in the physical world but rather participating in a more spiritual pursuit, one could get into a very high and holy experience in the spiritual world. That person might think that being in the exalted state is much better than being involved in the mundane, physical pursuits of making a living. They might think of running away from their everyday life in the rough and tumble world of physicality. But God says no to this also! This experience of feeling holy on Yom Kippur is not to be an everyday experience. It is a special time and place when one is supposed to be in this state. There is a time when it is appropriate to enter the "Holy of Holies" but then there is a time when one has to come back and live in and deal with the mundane world.

The greatest thing for both those who deeply study Torah and those who are solely involved in the mundane world is to do God's will rather than give in to other impulses. This means that one must put aside selfish desires – what "I" want – and focus on one's God-given mission. If God wants one person to be predominantly involved in the physical world – they should be so involved, facing up to and overcoming all the trials and tribulations of that endeavor. Realizing that this type of mission is given to them by God they should fulfill it with joy. This might cause a person to feel depressed because they are not moving forward and upward in spirituality. They might feel that their life is incomplete. But this is not the case. The purpose of a person's life is to fulfill God's mission for them and to make this world a place for God to dwell.

So we see that both the spiritually occupied and the physically occupied should live in a manner that allows them to live-up to their responsibility in this physical world. ■

Mothers' Day

Lonnie Sussman, staff writer

May is the month of Mothers' Day. It may be a holiday made up by the company that produces Mothers' Day cards but there is real emotion attached to the day. Whether your mother is here physically or only in your memory, it can be a day of honor and love.

There are tons of jokes, mostly bad ones, about Jewish mothers, but we all know that exaggerations about this subject don't come close to the reality of their impact on our lives. For many of us, one of those indelible impacts, or maybe I should say edible impacts, has to do with food.

Recently, I found a copy of the *Hadassah Jewish Cookbook* edited by Joan Schwartz Michel, published in 2002. In the introduction, the editor writes about our traditional foods; "Make no mistake about it; tradition survives only in the observance of it." What a powerful reminder for all of us! I spoke with a number of women to ask them about their memories of "mom's cooking." My inquiries were met with smiles, stories, and recipes.

Lonnie Sussman

Along with the smiles and memories another interesting theme appeared; we ate a lot of meat! I think these recipes represent the 1950s and 1960s in American Jewish cooking. Just as every Jewish community throughout history is influenced by the surrounding culture and the available foods, Jewish Americans were influenced by food trends of this era along with the memories of the previous generations of cooks.

Hilda Diogenes' Mandel Bread (parve if you omit the chocolate chips)

Hilda Diogenes, z'l', was Cindy Frey's mom. In her last decades, Hilda was a regular visitor to Ann Arbor along with her husband, Leibish, z'l'. They were both European born, survivors of the Holocaust and often told some of their stories. The complete story for both is archived by the Steven Spielberg Project.

Here is Cindy's memory: "My mother was a wonderful baker and there was always Mandel bread in the house and usually some in her purse, just in case you might need a little snack. When her grandson, Robert, spent his junior year in France, Bubbie sent him packages filled with candies, nuts and, of course, Mandel bread. Mandel bread travels very well, especially when packed with a Bubbie's love."

¾ cup vegetable oil
1 cup sugar
3 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla
3 cups flour
2 tsp. baking powder
Dash of salt
¾ cup toasted, chopped walnuts
Optional ¾ cup chocolate chips
Cinnamon sugar mixture for dusting

Mix together oil and sugar until combined. Mix in eggs and add vanilla. Sift together the flour, baking soda and salt. Add the dry ingredients to the sugar/egg mixture. Once it is well mixed, add the nuts and chocolate chips (if using them). Cover the dough with plastic wrap and refrigerate for a couple of hours or overnight.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Remove dough from the refrigerator and shape into 3 "loaves" and place on a parchment covered cookie sheet, slightly apart because the dough spreads. Bake for 25 minutes and let cool. Slice to desired thickness. Put pieces back on cookie sheet on their sides and dust with the cinnamon/sugar mix. You can flip the sides over after a few minutes so that both sides get the additional baking. Bake another 5-10 minutes until slightly crispy.

Sylvia Knazan's Classic Sour Cream Coffee Cake

My dear friend Sherry's mom was a fabulous baker who often had guests for Sunday brunch where sour cream coffee cake was served. This was a go-to recipe that was very popular in the 1960s and 1970s. Sherry has inherited her mom's talent and is also famous for her chocolate chip cookies. When she makes this cake she remembers her mother and her baking tips.

For Topping:
1 cup chopped walnuts or pecans
2/3 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 Tablespoon ground cinnamon

For Cake:
4 cups all -purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
2 cups sugar
4 eggs
1 pint sour cream
1 Tablespoon vanilla extract

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Generously grease the sides or use baking spray that contains flour, of the tube of a 10-inch tube pan and set aside. To make the topping, combine the nuts, brown sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl and set aside.

To make the cake, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt onto a sheet of waxed paper and set aside.

In a large bowl, beat the butter on high speed until light. Gradually add the sugar and continue beating until very light and fluffy. Change the mixer speed to medium and beat in the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Change the mixer speed to low. Alternately beat in the sifted dry ingredients and the sour cream and vanilla, beginning and ending with the dry ingredients. Beat until everything is blended.

Spoon half the batter into the prepared pan and spread evenly. Sprinkle half the topping over it. Top with the remaining batter, smoothing even with a spatula. Sprinkle the remaining topping over the top. Bake until the cake shrinks from the sides of the pan, the top is golden and a cake tester inserted halfway between the sides and the tube comes out clean. This will take about an hour and 10 minutes. Cool in the pan set on a wire rack for about 20 minutes. Then, carefully invert onto a serving plate.

Grandma A. J.'s Cornflake Baked Chicken

Shira Klein's story about her mother included the introduction, "Mom was a true Jewish mother, a real heimishe lady cooking for far more than were seated at her table." In her honor and memory Shira wrote a cookbook for her family based on her mom's recipes. Some of the favorite meals that appeared regularly on their table included breaded veal cutlets with the "fat around the edges adding to the yumminess," liver and onions, and tongue. Here is her mother's famous Cornflake Chicken. Serves 6, bake at 350 degrees

2 fryers, cut into 8ths
4 cups cornflakes, crumbled
2 eggs
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper
½ teaspoon paprika
½ teaspoon garlic powder

Wash and dry chicken parts, beat the eggs in one dish and combine the cornflakes and seasonings in another. Line a large baking tray with mar-parv rubbed foil. Dip chicken in the eggs and then the cornflake mixture. Place the chicken on the foil. Add another dap of mar-parv on each piece of chicken. Bake for 45-60 minutes until the crust is crisp.

Evelyn Liberman's Mushroom Barley Soup

Anita Liberman Lampear's mom now lives in Ann Arbor. She wrote, "My mom made a really good Mushroom Barley Soup. One of my best friends from high school also loved the soup. She got the recipe from my mother and still makes it today, maybe even more often that I do!"

1 very small round steak, diced; or a soup bone
1 onion, diced
1 Tablespoon olive oil
Saute and then add
1 lb. mushrooms
Saute, then add 1 package Manischewitz vegetable soup mix
2 beef bouillon cubes
3 sliced carrots
3 sliced celery
2 small handfuls quick cooking barley
6 cups water
Salt and pepper to taste
Simmer 2 hours

Simi Cutler's Pea Soup

Dan Cutler remembers how well his family ate. I should write, "we ate" because we are siblings. His mouth started watering when he talked about *gribenes*, lamb rib bar-b-ques and the fresh vegetables that were always part of dinner. We had *gribenes* on Fridays, but we gobbled them down before dinner. Our dad called them "cholesterol city." Wow, they were good! *Gribenes* were just some of the excess chicken skin, cut into smaller pieces and fried in a little chicken shmaltz, sometimes with diced onions. They were drained on a napkin and salted to increase the non-healthiness of this dish. The lamb ribs were first baked in the oven and then finished on the bar-b-que while a can of Heinz Vegetarian Baked Beans, opened, was also put on the bar-b-que. Yum. Our mother, Simi Cutler z"l is also famous for her pea soup.

This is an "old-fashioned" recipe where the amounts are intuitive. I'm adding an estimate of the amounts.

"Some" dried peas – probably about 2 cups
A soup bone- this adds flavor and thickens the soup
Saute onions, carrots and celery – amounts aren't given so start with 1 onion, 2 carrots and
2 stalks of celery. Salt, pepper, garlic powder – this is to taste
6-8 cups water depending on how many cups of peas.

Bring to a boil and then lower the temperature and cook about 2 hours – check for doneness after one hour.

TBE events May 2019

Nellie Stansbury, special to the WJN

Families with Young Children (FYC): Tot Shabbat Service

Fridays, May 3, 10, 17 & 31, 5:45 p.m., TBE Sanctuary

5:45 p.m. | Tot (0–5 year olds) Shabbat Services with Rabbi Whinston and Cantor Hayut, 6:15 p.m. Dinner for Tot Shabbat | 6:45 p.m. Shira Service. All of your favorite songs led by TBE's tot team, Cantor Hayut and Rabbi Whinston. Join us for macaroni and cheese, fish sticks, applesauce, and a salad bar immediately following the short service. Dinner is just $5 per person. Buy a punch card ahead of time for a discounted price. Punch cards are available in the TBE office.

Weekly Lunch & Learn

Fridays, May 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31, TBE Adult Lounge, Noon

Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Sessions are open to the entire community. Feel free to bring your lunch.

Women of TBE: Historical Novel Reading Group

Monday, May 13, 12:30 p.m., TBE Library

The WTBE Reading Group meets on the second Monday of each month, October through June. Contact Molly Lindner, burnham@umich.edu.

Saturday Torah Study

Saturdays, May 4, 11, 18 & 25, 8:50 a.m.

Join us for this weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston.

Women's Torah Study

Mondays, May 13 & 27, 7:00 p.m.

An in-depth study and lively discussion of the week's Torah portion led by Cantor Regina Hayut. The group will explore various passages from the portion looking at several translations and commentaries from a variety of scholars from Talmudic times to the modern day. No Hebrew knowledge necessary to participate in the discussion. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org.

Guitar-led Shabbat Service

Fridays, May 24, 6:30-8:30 p.m., TBE Sanctuary

A special, song-filled, musical celebration with singing, dancing, guitar, and a big dose of ruach. It's how we provide another gateway to prayer. This service takes the place of Shabbat Achat and falls on the fourth Friday of each month.

Euchre Night

Saturday, May 4, 8:00 p.m., TBE Adult Lounge

Grab a partner or come alone! All levels welcome.Contact Dave Ostreicher, djostrei@umichedu, with questions.

Beginners Meditation with Linda Greene

Thursdays, May 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, 12:30 p.m., TBE Chapel

Learn about breath, centering, choosing objects of focus, and the purpose of meditating Jewishly. All levels welcome. Contact Linda Greene, lingreene@gmail.com, with questions.

Advanced Meditation with Linda Greene

Thursdays, May 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, 1:00 p.m., TBE Chapel

Linda Greene offers brief Jewish teachings and leads a 20-30 minute meditation time. Contact Linda Greene, lingreene@gmail.com, with questions.

Spirituality Book Club

Tuesday, May 14, 7:00 p.m. and Thursday, May 16, Noon, Adult Lounge

Led by Annie Rose, TBE's Cantor Emerita. Join us for the spring session of TBE's Spirituality Book Club! Please feel free to come to our Tuesday evening session or our Thursday afternoon session. Contact Cantor Annie, cantorannie@gmail.com, with questions. ■

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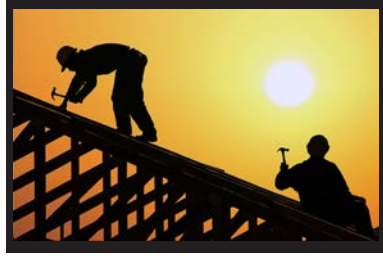

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May activities at Beth Israel Congregation

Yom Hashoah Observance

Wednesday, May 1

7:30 p.m. Service with Lighting of Yom Hashoah Candles

8:00 p.m. Presentation by Holocaust Survivor Martin Lowenberg

Martin Lowenberg

The numbers of Holocaust survivors continues to dwindle, and the opportunities to hear them speak will become sadly all too rare. This year, to mark Erev Yom Hashoah, the greater Ann Arbor community has the opportunity to hear Holocaust survivor Martin Lowenberg, who is a regular speaker at the Holocaust Memorial Center in Farmington Hills. Prior to his presentation, there will be a Yom Hashoah service with special readings and poems led by Rabbi Nadav Caine.

Martin Lowenberg was born in Schenklengsfeld, Germany in 1928 -- five years before Adolf Hitler came to power. And that day, Jan. 30, 1933, forever changed Lowenberg's life. Nazis marched along the streets of Lowenberg's hometown to celebrate Hitler's appointment as Chancellor of Germany and burnt down his family's home. Martin Lowenberg spent his teenage years living in five different concentration camps after his parents and twin brothers were killed. Lowenberg is a regular speaker at the Holocaust Memorial Center in Farmington Hills. According to Collyer Smith, former Rotary Club president, "Martin shares his personal Holocaust story not with fear and hate, but rather through inspiration and hope."

Community Wide Yom Hazikaron Ceremony

Tuesday, May 7, 7 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.

The Ann Arbor community will gather at Beth Israel to remember and honor those who died serving in the Israel Defense Forces or those who were murdered in terror attacks. The commemoration includes moving memorial poems, videos, and musical selections. Participants have the opportunity to

light a candle in memory of one of the fallen as they enter the foyer of the synagogue. The ceremony itself includes volunteer readers and Rabbis from across the community. Celebrating Israeli Independence day in Israel and outside Israel is a two stage process. The first is to recognize and mourn the lives of those soldiers who have fallen in her defense, and those innocent men, women and children who lost their lives in acts of terrorism. The second, which takes place on the following day, is to celebrate the miracle of the existence of Jewish state. Both are equally important.

Shabbat Limmud

Saturday, May 11 and 25, 9 a.m.

Adults are invited for Torah study over coffee and cake. The discussions, led by Rabbi Dobrusin, are informal, lively and participatory. The study begins with traditional texts and participants add their own thoughts on the Torah, Haftarah portion of the week, or other traditional texts.

Family Service and Dinner

May 5:45 p.m. – 7:30 p. m.

Families, individuals, and everyone else are invited to participate in a family-friendly service and dinner. From 5:45 – 6:30 p.m., folks gather around a gigantic Shabbat table filled with candles, tzedakah boxes, and challot, and sing while accompanied by camp-style guitar. In the glow of candles, Shabbat prayers are sung, and a brief teaching is given by Rabbi Caine. Then Kiddush is sung followed by a family-friendly dairy dinner. There is no charge for the dinner, but RSVPs must be made to Beth at office@bethisrael-aa.org. The May 17th evening is sponsored by Brad and Robin Axelrod, Gary and Eileen Freed, David Sherman and Carey Wexler Sherman.

Save the Date: Beth Israel Presents A County Fair!

Sunday, June 23, 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.

You know its summer when the county fair rolls around! This year's theme for Beth Israel's annual fundraiser is "A County Fair." This family-friendly event, aimed at individuals, couples, and families with children of all ages, will feature games, a cupcake walk, crafts, refreshments, and a festive dairy dinner served family style. Entertainment includes a roving fiddler and square dancing with a Jewish spin. A crafts tent will feature a variety of items, a plant exchange, and more.

As part of the Beth Israel County Fair, a beautiful Kaffe Fasset Mystery Quilt will be raffled off. Kaffe Fasset is an internationally recognized artist, whose knit patterns and quilt designs, both in fabric, are projects that are bright, colorful, and always interesting.

Sponsorships are encouraged to help support this event. Sponsors allow Beth Israel to subsidize tickets for families with young children and make it possible for everyone to attend.

Those interested are asked to contact Beth Jarvis at office@bethisrael-aa.org.

All of Beth Israel's events, educational offerings, and recreational programs are open to the general community. If you would like further information, please call 665-9897 or visit www.bethisrael-aa.org, or Beth Israel's facebook page. ■

Calendar

May 2019

Wednesday 1

All My Heart: Chabad. Class on Jewish prayer. 9:30a.m. and 7:30p.m.

Yidish tish ייִדיש טיש Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group): JCC. After many years at the Michigan League, we now meet at the Ann Arbor JCC, 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108, Conference Room. We're experimenting with combining the long-time Yiddish reading group and the conversational one, about 37½ minutes each of conversation and reading. Free and open to all who are interested in Yiddish language and culture, no matter what level of proficiency, regardless of age. All manner of topics are covered with an effort to improve participants' Yiddish speaking and reading skills, especially vocabulary. Everyone is welcome to join in at any time, or to just listen. For more information and to make certain that we are meeting on a specific day, please e-mail Elliot H. Gertel at egertel@umich.edu or call Lily Ladin at (734) 662-6613 at least one day before scheduled meeting day. 10:45 a.m.

Mahj: TBE. Offsite. 1–3 p.m.

Yom HaShoah Service: TBE. 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Erev Yom Hashoah with Holocaust Survivor Martin Lowenberg: BIC 7:30 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC - GSAC 2010 Lower Level. Join the Theology Book Club to read and discuss books on Jewish thought and beliefs. 8 p.m.

Thursday 2

Baking Mavens: TBE. 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Jewish Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Beginners 12:30-1 p.m., Advanced 1-2:30 p.m., Introduction to Sephirot 2 –2:30pm.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study from the original Talmud tractate. 8 p.m. *Thursdays.*

Friday 3

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Adult Lounge. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Sessions are open to the entire community. Feel free to bring your lunch. Noon–1 p.m.

First Friday Shabbat: Jewish Cultural Society at the JCC. All are invited to join the JCS to welcome Shabbat. Dinner from a local restaurant follows a short observance that includes secular readings, songs, candle lighting, wine, and challah. Children are welcome. Dinner is free for JCS members. The cost of dinner for non-members is $10/person or $25/family. Registration is required: www.jewishculturalsociety.org/observances/shabbat/. 6:30 – 9 p.m.

Family Shabbat Services: TBE. Tot Shabbat (0-5yrs) from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Tot Shabbat Dinner from 6:15–6:45 p.m. 6:45 p.m. Shira Service

Birthdays and Anniversaries Shabbat and WTBE: TBE. 7:30–9 p.m.

Friday evening services: See listing at end of calendar.

Saturday 4

Torah Study: TBE. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Bat Mitzvah Service: Hannah Ziegler: TBE 10 a.m.-12:15p.m.

Tot Shabbat: AAOM, Hillel 1429 Hill St. Spirited and lively Tot friendly service. For tots ages 0–5 years old and their families with singing, storytime, and a kids' Kiddush to follow. Non-members welcome and encouraged to attend. For details, email welcome@annarborminyan.org. 11:15 a.m.– noon.

Euchre Night: TBE. Adult Lounge. Grab a partner or come alone! All levels welcome. Contact Dave Ostreicher, djostrei@umich.edu, with questions. 8–9:30 p.m.

Shabbat services: ***See listing at end of calendar.***

Sunday 5

BIRS Graduation and K – 8 Family Mitzvah Day: BIC. The day begins with graduation ceremonies and is followed by parents and children taking part in a variety of mitzvah projects including a bottle and can drive. Drop off your recyclables in the boxes available downstairs before May 5. Contact Mira Sussman for details at school@bethisrael-aa.org. 9:30 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30–11:30 a.m. Sundays.

JCLP Graduation. Please join the Jewish Communal Leadership Program as we celebrate our 2019 graduates on Sunday, May 5th. Program and light brunch is at the School of Social Work (1080 S. University Ave, Ann Arbor). To RSVP or for questions, please email vpwalker@umich.edu. 10 -11:45 a.m.

Yom HaShoah Commemoration: Holocaust Memorial Center, 28123 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. **2:30 p.m**

Chaverim B'Shirim: JCC. Now in their 26th year, Chaverim B'Shirim (Friends in Song) with founder/director Marilyn Krimm and her dedicated group of happy songsters will sing Rodgers and Hammerstein: Songs of Hope and Love. Following performance, light edibles and refreshments. 3 – 5 p.m.

Monday 6

WTBE Fiber Arts: TBE, Adult Lounge. All are welcome – beginners to experts, we help each other to get better at our craft. We have some project ideas and materials to help you out. As a group we will be knitting hats for cancer patients that can be completed successfully as a beginner. For more information contact Martha Weintraub at weintraub.martha@gmail.com. 7:30–9 p.m.

Tuesday 7

Erev Yom Hazikaron Ceremony: BIC. The Ann Arbor community will gather to remember and honor those who died serving in the Israel Defense Forces or in terror attacks. The commemoration includes moving memorial poems, videos, and musical selections. 7 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Torah may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study of the text with the classical Rashi commentary. 8 p.m.

Talmud Class with Rabbi Anstandig: AAOM / Hillel 1429 Hill Street. Join thousands of Jews around the world as we all study Masechet Megilla and the holiday of Purim, one page a week! Be prepared to be challenged and surprised as learn the Talmudic background to the holiday we all know and love. 8:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Wednesday 8

All My Heart: Chabad. Class on Jewish prayer. 9:30a.m. and 7:30p.m.

Yidish tish ייִדיש טיש (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group): JCC. After many years at the Michigan League, we now meet at the Ann Arbor JCC, 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108, Conference Room. See first Wednesday for full description. For more information and to make certain that we are meeting on a specific day, please e-mail Elliot H. Gertel at egertel@umich.edu or call Lily Ladin at (734) 662-6613 at least one day before scheduled meeting day. 10:45 a.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC - GSAC 2010 Lower Level. Join the Theology Book Club to read and discuss books on Jewish thought and beliefs. 8 p.m.

Thursday 9

Jewish Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Beginners 12:30-1 p.m., Advanced 1-2:30 p.m., Introduction to Sephirot 2 –2:30pm.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study from the original Talmud tractate. 8 p.m. *Thursdays.*

Friday 10

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Adult Lounge. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Sessions are open to the entire community. Feel free to bring your lunch. Noon–1 p.m.

Family Shabbat Services: TBE. Tot Shabbat (0-5yrs) from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Tot Shabbat Dinner from 6:15–6:45 p.m. 6:45 p.m. Shira Service

Shabbat Service with adult choir Kol Halev and Multi-generational Service: TBE. 7:30 – 9 p.m.

Cinetopia and Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival co-sponsor film. Michigan Theater **8 p.m.**

Friday evening services: See listing at end of calendar.

Saturday 11

Torah Study: TBE. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Shabbat Limmud: BIC. Held before Shabbat morning services by Rabbi Robert Dobrusin, this session will offer a lively discussion on Parashat HaShavua, the Torah portion of the week and other traditional texts. 9 a.m.

Bar Mitzvah Service: Madeline Miller: TBE. 10 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. This special Shabbat morning program is for preschoolers and their parents with songs, stories, prayers, and the Shabbat "Mystery Box." 11:15 a.m.

Mini Minyan: BIC. The service for elementary school age children will include Shabbat prayers and fun educational activities. The children will join the main congregation for the final prayers in the sanctuary. 11:15 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: AAOM, Hillel 1429 Hill St. Spirited and lively Tot friendly service. For tots ages 0–5 years old and their families with singing, storytime, and a kids' Kiddush to follow. Non-members welcome and encouraged to attend. For details, email welcome@annarborminyan.org. 11:15 a.m.– noon.

Shabbat services: ***See listing at end of calendar.***

Sunday 12

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. **10:30–11:30 a.m.**

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival films at 12:30p.m.,5 p.m., and 8 p.m.

Monday 13

WTBE Historical Novel Reading Group: TBE. This month's book is Barbara Cleverly, *The Kashmiri Rose*. 12:30–2 p.m.

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival. 2p.m. an 6:45 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. An in-depth study and lively discussion of the week's Torah portion led by Cantor Regina Hayut. The group will explore various passages from the portion looking at several translations and commentaries from a variety of scholars from Talmudic times to the modern day. No Hebrew knowledge necessary to participate in the discussion. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7–9 p.m.

Tuesday 14

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: 5 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Torah may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study of the text with the classical Rashi commentary. 8 p.m.

Spirituality Book Club: TBE. The April-May book for the Spirituality Book Club is God Was in This Place & I, I Did Not Know: Finding Self, Spirituality and Ultimate Meaning by Rabbi Lawrence Kushner. 7– 8 p.m.

Brotherhood Hebrew Bible Study: TBE. 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Talmud Class with Rabbi Anstandig: AAOM / Hillel 1429 Hill Street. Join thousands of Jews around the world as we all study Masechet Megilla and the holiday of Purim, one page a week! Be prepared to be challenged and surprised as learn the Talmudic background to the holiday we all know and love. 8:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Wednesday 15

All My Heart: Cabad. Class on Jewish prayer. 9:30a.m. and 7:30p.m.

Yidish tish ייִדיש טיש Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group): JCC. After many years at the Michigan League, we now meet at the Ann Arbor JCC, 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108, Conference Room. See first Wednesday for full description. For more information and to make certain that we are meeting on a specific day, please e-mail Elliot H. Gertel at egertel@umich.edu or call Lily Ladin at (734) 662-6613 at least one day before scheduled meeting day. 10:45 a.m.

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Mahj: TBE. Offsite. 1–3 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC - GSAC 2010 Lower Level. Join the Theology Book Club to read and discuss books on Jewish thought and beliefs. 8 p.m.

Thursday 16

Spirituality Book Club: TBE. The April-May book for the Spirituality Book Club is God Was in This Place & I, I Did Not Know: Finding Self, Spirituality and Ultimate Meaning Noon-1 p.m.

Third Thursday @ the J: JCC. The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor Dr. Donovan T. Maust and Erica Soloway discuss the results of the National Poll on Healthy Aging's 2017 report on sleep in

their talk, Trouble Sleeping? Don't assume it's a Normal Part of Aging Optional lunch available at noon. Lunches must be reserved at least one day in advance. For more information, contact Rachael at rachaelhoffenblum@jccannarbor.org or (734) 971-0990. Noon–1 p.m.

Jewish Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Beginners 12:30-1 p.m., Advanced 1-2:30 p.m., Introduction to Sephirot 2 –2:30pm.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.

TBE Brotherhood Guy's Night Out: offsite. 6:30-8 p.m.

Aron Kaufman and the Dream Ensemble. Kerrytown Concert House. Tickets $10-25. **8 p.m.**

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. See first Thursday of month for details. 8 p.m. *Thursdays.*

Friday 17

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Adult Lounge. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Sessions are open to the entire community. Feel free to bring your lunch. Noon–1 p.m.

Family Shabbat Services: TBE. Tot Shabbat (0-5yrs) from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Tot Shabbat Dinner from 6:15–6:45 p.m. 6:45 p.m. Shira Service.

Family Service and Free Dinner with Teacher Appreciation Shabbat: BIC. Gather around a gigantic Shabbat table and enjoy camp-style guitar, singing, and a brief teaching on the meaning of family followed by a family-friendly dinner. Sponsored by Brad and Robin Axelrod, Gary and Eileen Freed, and David Sherman and Carey Wexler Sherman. RSVP online at www.bethisrael-aa.org. **5:45 p.m.**

Brotherhood Shabbat Service: TBE. 7:30-9p.m.

Friday evening services: See listing at end of calendar.

Saturday 18

Torah Study: TBE. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: AAOM, Hillel 1429 Hill St. Spirited and lively Tot friendly service. For tots ages 0–5 years old and their families with singing, storytime, and a kids' Kiddush to follow. Non-members welcome and encouraged to attend. For details, email welcome@annarborminyan.org. 11:15 a.m.– noon.

Shabbat services: ***See listing at end of calendar.***

Sunday 19

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. **10:30–11:30 a.m.**

MOSAIC: JFS. Celebrating our community. A. Alfred Taubman Building, 109 Zina Pitcher Place. **2-5 p.m.**

Hand in Hand First Presbyterian Church, 1432 Washtenaw Ave. Hand in Hand bi-cultural schools in Israel founder Dr. Merav Ben-Nun: "Creating Peace: Education and Community Building in a Regions of Conflict." **2 p.m.**

Monday 20

WTBE Fiber Arts: TBE, Adult Lounge. All are welcome – beginners to experts, we help each other to get better at our craft. We have some project ideas and materials to help you out. As a group we will be knitting hats for cancer patients that can be completed successfully as a beginner. For more information contact Martha Weintraub at weintraub.martha@gmail.com. 7:30–9 p.m.

Tuesday 21

Tea and Torah on Tuesday–for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. *See first Tuesday of month.*

Talmud Class with Rabbi Anstandig: AAOM / Hillel 1429 Hill Street. Join thousands of Jews around the world as we all study Masechet Megilla and the holiday of Purim, one page a week! Be prepared to be challenged and surprised as learn the Talmudic background to the holiday we all know and love. 8:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Wednesday 22

All My Heart: Chabad. Class on Jewish prayer. 9:30a.m. and 7:30p.m.

Yidish tish ייִדיש טיש (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group): JCC. After many years at the Michigan League, we now meet at the Ann Arbor JCC, 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108, Conference Room. See first Wednesday for full description. For more information and to make certain that we are meeting on a specific day, please e-mail Elliot H. Gertel at egertel@umich.edu or call Lily Ladin at (734) 662-6613 at least one day before scheduled meeting day. 10:45 a.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC - GSAC 2010 Lower Level. Join the Theology Book Club to read and discuss books on Jewish thought and beliefs. 8 p.m.

Thursday 23, *Lag B'Omer*

Jewish Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Beginners 12:30-1 p.m., Advanced 1-2:30 p.m., Introduction to Sephirot 2 –2:30pm.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Lag B'Omer: Chabad. Details TBD

Friday 24

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Adult Lounge. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Sessions are open to the entire community. Feel free to bring your lunch. Noon–1 p.m.

Tot Shabbat: TBE. 6-6:30p.m.

Guitar-led Shabbat Service: TBE. Sanctuary 6:30–8 p.m.

Friday evening services: See listing at end of calendar.

Saturday 25

Torah Study: TBE. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Shabbat Limmud: BIC. Held before Shabbat morning services by Rabbi Robert Dobrusin, this session will offer a lively discussion on Parashat HaShavua, the Torah portion of the week and other traditional texts. 9 a.m.

Bat Mitzvah Service: Sarita Gankin: TBE. 10-11a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. This special Shabbat morning program is for preschoolers and their parents with songs, stories, prayers, and the Shabbat "Mystery Box." 11:15 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: AAOM, Hillel 1429 Hill St. Spirited and lively Tot friendly service. For tots ages 0–5 years old and their families with singing, storytime, and a kids' Kiddush to follow. Non-members welcome and encouraged to attend. For details, email welcome@annarborminyan.org. 11:15 a.m.– noon.

Mini Minyan: BIC. The service for elementary school age children will include Shabbat prayers and fun educational activities. The children will join the main congregation for the final prayers in the sanctuary. 11:15 a.m.

Shabbat services: ***See listing at end of calendar.***

Sunday 26

TBE Families Monthly Meet-Up: Offiste. 10a.m.-Noon.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Monday 27

Women's Torah Study: TBE. An in-depth study and lively discussion of the week's Torah portion led by Cantor Regina Hayut. The group will explore various passages from the portion looking at several translations and commentaries from a variety of scholars from Talmudic times to the modern day. No Hebrew knowledge necessary to participate in the discussion. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7–9 p.m.

Tuesday 28

Tea and Torah on Tuesday–for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. *See first Tuesday of month.*

Talmud Class with Rabbi Anstandig: AAOM / Hillel 1429 Hill Street. Join thousands of Jews around the world as we all study Masechet Megilla and the holiday of Purim, one page a week! Be prepared to be challenged and surprised as learn the Talmudic background to the holiday we all know and love. 8:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Wednesday 29

All My Heart: Chabad. Class on Jewish prayer. 9:30a.m. and 7:30p.m.

Yidish tish ייִדיש טיש Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group): JCC. After many years at the Michigan League, we now meet at the Ann Arbor JCC, 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108, Conference Room. See first Wednesday for full description. For more information and to make certain that we are meeting on a specific day, please e-mail Elliot H. Gertel at egertel@umich.edu or call Lily Ladin at (734) 662-6613 at least one day before scheduled meeting day. 10:45 a.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC - GSAC 2010 Lower Level. Join the Theology Book Club to read and discuss books on Jewish thought and beliefs. 8 p.m.

Thursday 30

Jewish Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Beginners 12:30-1 p.m., Advanced 1-2:30 p.m., Introduction to Sephirot 2 –2:30pm.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. See first Thursday of month for details. 8 p.m. *Thursdays.*

Friday 31

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Adult Lounge. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Sessions are open to the entire community. Feel free to bring your lunch. Noon–1 p.m.

Family Shabbat Services: TBE. Tot Shabbat (0-5yrs) from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Tot Shabbat Dinner from 6:15–6:45 p.m. 6:45 p.m. Shira Service

Friday evening services: See listing at end of calendar.

Weekly Friday night Shabbat services

Shabbat Service: AAOM. Services held at UM Hillel at candle lighting. Contact rabbi@annarborminyan.org to confirm time.

Shabbat Service: BIC. 6 p.m.

Shabbat Service: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m., followed by tot dinner. Traditional Service at 7:30 p.m. Once a month Middle School Service at 7:30 p.m. For information, call (734) 665-4744.

Shabbat Service: AARC. Every fourth Friday at the JCC. Tot Shabbat from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Pizza for the little ones at 6:15 p.m. Service at 6:30 p.m., followed by vegetarian potluck at 8 p.m. Childcare during service. All are welcome to attend. For information, email info@aarecon.org, phone (734) 445-1910, or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Service: Chabad. Begins at candle lighting time. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals and Jewish holidays. Call (734) 995-3276 in advance.

Weekly Shabbat services

Shabbat Services: AAOM. Morning service at UM Hillel, 9:30 a.m. Home Hospitality for Shabbat and Holiday Meals: Contact: welcome@annarborminyan.org.

Shabbat Services: BIC. 9:30 a.m. For other service times, visit www.bethisrael-aa.org.

Shabbat Services: AARC. Second Saturday of each month at the JCC. 10 a.m. Ta-Shma/Come and Learn. Service begins at 10:30 a.m. Traditional liturgy with music, chanting and contemporary readings and discussion. For information, email info@aarecon.org, phone (734) 445-1910, or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Services: Chabad. Friday night services at Shabbat candle lighting time. Saturday morning services at 9:45 a.m. Afternoon Mincha services 45 minutes before sundown. Call (734) 995-3276 for Home Hospitality and Meals for Shabbat and Jewish Holidays.

Shabbat Services: Pardes Hannah. Generally meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Call (734) 663-4039 for more information. 10 a.m. Led by Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg.

Shabbat Services: TBE. Torah Study at 8:50 a.m. Morning Minyan with Rabbi Josh Whinston and Cantor Regina Lambert-Hayut at 9:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service at 10 a.m. most weeks. Call the office at (734) 665-4744 or consult website at www.templebethemeth.org for service details.

Home Hospitality and Meals: Chabad. Every Shabbat and Holiday. Call (734) 995-3276 in advance.

Frequently Listed Organizations

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM)
1429 Hill Street 248-408-3269
Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 913-9705
Beth Israel Congregation (BIC)
2000 Washtenaw Ave. 665-9897
Chabad House
715 Hill Street 995-3276
Jewish Community Center (JCC)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 971-0990
Jewish Cultural Society (JCS)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 975-9872
Jewish Family Services (JFS)
2245 South State Street 769-0209
Jewish Federation
2939 Birch Hollow Drive 677-0100
Pardes Hannah
2010 Washtenaw Ave. 761-5324
Temple Beth Emeth (TBE)
2309 Packard Road 665-4744
UM Hillel
1429 Hill Street 769-0500

Jewish Film Festival

Shira Steiner, continued from page 1

never get the chance to introduce her to any partner that I might eventually introduce to my parents, and by extension, would never have the opportunity to come out to her. Even if I had, I realized, I wouldn't even know how to broach the topic – what words I would use, how she might react, etc. She was a Holocaust survivor who spoke broken Hebrew and very little English, and I spoke Hebrew at a fluent, but elementary school level (I left Israel at age 10). In addition, a little earlier when she had first passed, upon going through her things, my dad discovered a marriage certificate from before the war that showed a previous marriage she had never shared with her family including, presumably, her husband – my grandfather.

I'd been thinking over these two secrets – hers about her life before the war, and mine, about my current life; both secrets that were kept from my dad in the past and present. I shared these stories and my curiosity with familial secrets with Jeremy, who began writing many iterations of the script, the last of which became *Boxes*.

WJN: Can you tell me a little about the plot of the film, and the ways in which it is drawn from your own life?

Steiner: The film is about a grandmother ("Oma") – a Holocaust survivor – and her granddaughter spending an afternoon together, packing up the belongings of the recently deceased grandfather. Over the course of the afternoon, Oma tries to hide a secret she's kept from before the war, while the granddaughter tries to find the right moment to share her own secret about her sexuality and her partner. This story developed as an imagining of what it might have been like to try and come out to my own grandmother, had I had the chance before she passed away. This story represents just one fictional version of events that highlights how our secrets affect our relationships, and how we often hold each other at a distance because of them.

PHOTO BY ERIN BEN-MOCHE

From left *Boxes* director Jeremy Borison, Rebecca Katz, Boxes producer Shira Steiner and Dr. Shelby Weltz on a panel about LGBTQ grandchildren of Holocaust survivors.

WJN: How do you think your Jewish identity shapes your filmmaking, and vice versa?

Steiner: I think being Jewish, and a Third Generation Holocaust survivor, especially, drives my need to tell stories, both my own and others'. As a people, our strong traditions of storytelling – from Passover, to our cyclical reading of the Torah – allows our religious and cultural traditions to be passed from generation to generation. Telling a story like this one in particular, allows me to pay homage to my own family history and remind viewers not only of the events that shaped who we are so distinctly as the Jewish people, but also the privilege my generation has in being so open about who we are.

WJN: What does it mean to have a project of yours shown at the Detroit and Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festivals?

Steiner: This film is about and for my family. So, having it shown in my hometown of Ann Arbor, and at the Detroit JFF as well, gives me the opportunity to share it with them on the big screen, which is quite special. ■

Shabbat Candlelighting		Havdallah	
May 3	8:18 pm	May 4	9:24 pm
May 10	8:26 pm	May 11	9:33 pm
May 17	8:33 pm	May 18	9:41 pm
May 24	8:40 pm	May 25	9:49 pm
May 31	8:46 pm	June 1	9:56 pm

Hebrew Day School

Experiences Inspire Understanding

Jennifer Rosenberg, special to the WJN

Last month, students at Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor participated in a disability awareness workshop led by the Center for Independent Living, a local organization dedicated to empowering persons with disabilities and advocating for their inclusion across a wide range of spaces and activities. The workshop is part of a yearlong effort to educate HDS students about learning differences, disability, neurodiversity, and related subjects, all with a heavy emphasis on inclusiveness and on the opportunities for communication and connection across difference.

The workshop relied on simulations and other activities to provide HDS students with insight into the experiences of individuals with a range of disabilities. For example, students attempted to maneuver across different surfaces while seated in a wheelchair; they used devices that facilitate communication for those for whom speaking is difficult; they used goggles that simulate various visual impairments; and they attempted to decipher texts with words and letters arranged in a manner that resembles the way individuals with certain reading disabilities might see them.

Students also surveyed interior and exterior spaces at school (the parking lot, classrooms, bathrooms, etc.) to assess their accessibility to individuals with disabilities. (Students were pleased and proud to learn that HDS, and, more generally, the Jewish Community Center in which it is located, is a very accessible building.) And, finally, students spent time debriefing their experiences. They shared thoughts about what they had learned and about how they felt while engaged in the simulations, and they took note of issues about which they wanted to learn more. Some were particularly inspired by the thought that they might one day design tools that could help individuals with disabilities to live life to the fullest.

The disability workshop helped to reinforce and expand upon some of the lessons students had learned about inclusion through HDS programming earlier in the year. This includes visits from a visually-impaired person who relies on a guide dog for support, a visit from a high school student with autism, and an especially generative meeting with Rabbi Daniel Alter (who is the education director at Temple Beth Emeth) at which students learned about differences in the way people communicate.

Rabbi Alter discussed his own communication impairment with HDS students and emphasized that communication challenges need not be an insurmountable obstacle to rich interpersonal connection. He encouraged HDS students to discover this for themselves by finding ways to get to know individuals who struggle with conventional modes of communication. And after that initial visit, Rabbi Alter provided students with an opportunity to do just that by joining him periodically during their lunch hour to participate in a Jewish gaming club where he and HDS students play familiar games that Rabbi Alter modified so as to include a Jewish element of one sort or another. The club provides opportunities for students to connect with one another and with Rabbi Alter through the language of the game itself, the experience of playing together, and the experience of simply being together engaged in a common activity.

Hebrew Day School has made a special effort this year not only to educate students about learning differences and disability but to assure that the teaching methods deployed there are as inclusive as possible. For example, Sara Goldshlack, who serves as the school's Resource Specialist, supervised the creation of a sensory area at HDS this year. "When a student is experiencing sensory dysregulation," Goldshlack explained, "he/she may feel uncomfortable and internally disorganized. In that state, meaningful learning is usually not able to take place. The sensory area gives students an opportunity to regulate their own bodies in a safe space."

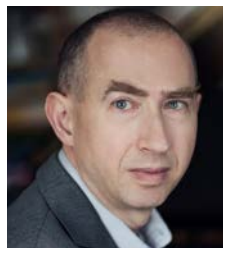
Laura Pasek, meanwhile, who teaches general studies in the 3rd/ 4th grade, is leading the school's efforts to assess the inclusiveness of the instruction provided to its own students. Pasek identified two guiding questions: 1) How can teachers foster empathy in students as it relates to people with disabilities? 2) How can teachers support and promote self-confidence and self-advocacy for those who confront learning and other challenges? To answer these questions, she continually seeks to learn - through her own self assessment and self reflection and that of her colleagues—about the extent to which HDS classrooms are inclusive spaces and responsive to these needs. Using her own teaching as a testing ground, she has videotaped her instruction to provide material for analysis by the rest of the HDS teaching staff. Under Morah Pasek's guidance, HDS teachers reviewed the video together in an effort to analyze and evaluate her teaching moves through an inclusion-oriented lens. This proved to be an enlightening and fruitful exercise for all.

In the weeks and months ahead, HDS students will turn their attention to emotional impairments such as depression and anxiety. They will learn about some of the ways in which these impairments can inhibit learning and productivity. Students will think about ways to support individuals who confront these challenges, and will continue their effort to make sure that the HDS community is an inclusive space for all. ■

Nemtsov pianist and Jewish art music scholar

Beth Dwoskin, staff writer

In late March, the University of Michigan School of Music, Theater and Dance (SMTD) presented its second annual Ann Arbor Residency for Jewish Art Music. This year, the residency featured Jascha Nemtsov, a virtuoso pianist and a prominent scholar of Jewish art music. Nemtsov is the Professor for the History of Jewish Music at the Franz Liszt University of Music, Weimar. He is also the Academic Director of the Cantorial School of the Abraham Geiger College, and he is on the Editorial Board of the Milken Archive of Jewish Music.



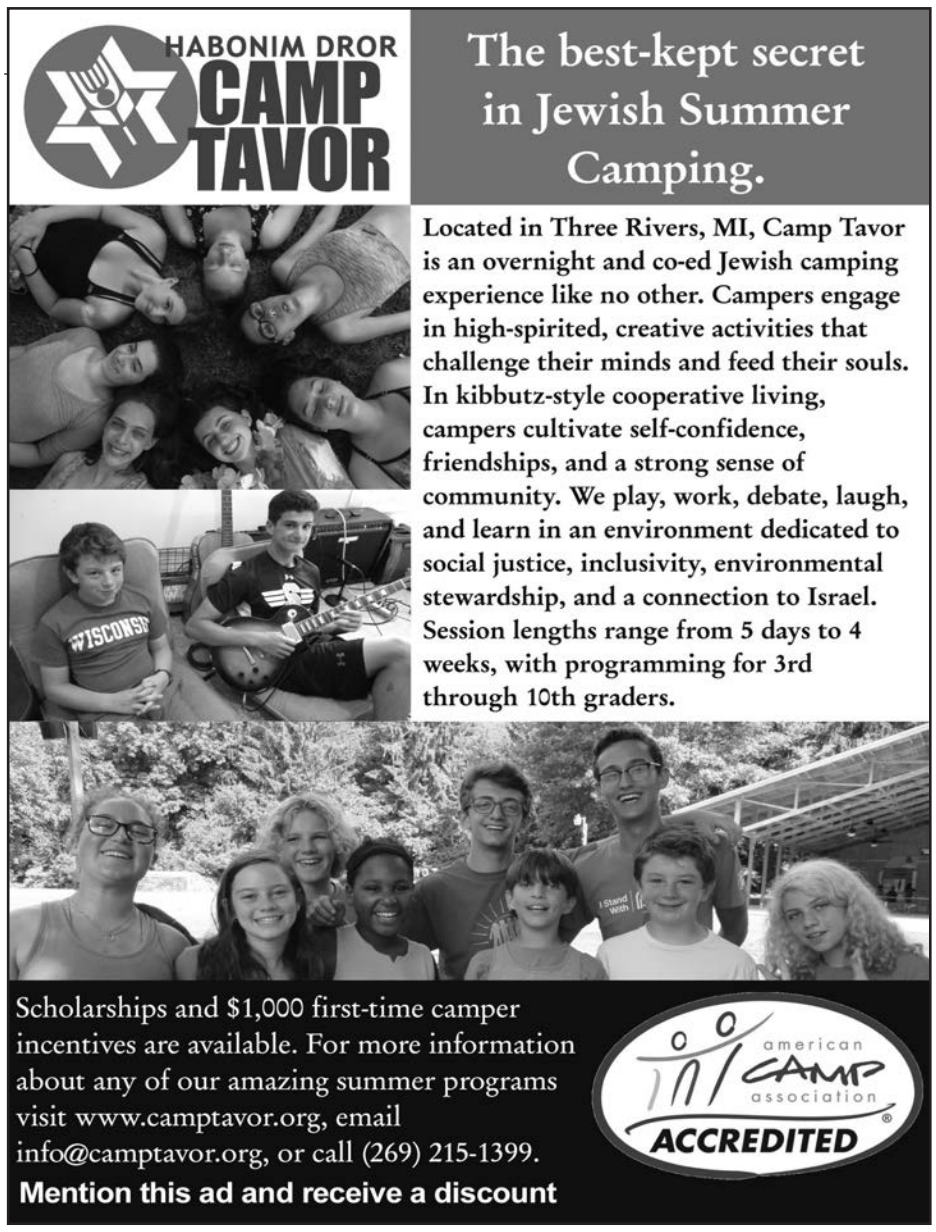
Jascha Nemtsov

During two evening concerts, Professor Nemtsov presented work by composers who were critical to the enterprise of modernizing Jewish music, but who are almost completely unknown in America. Among them was Julius Chajes, who was born in Galicia but spent most of his life performing serious Jewish music in Detroit as the founder of the Detroit Jewish Community Center symphony orchestra and the music director at Temple Beth El. His "Hora Nirkoda" will be familiar to lovers of Israeli dance. Professor Nemtsov also offered a short setting of "Shalom Rav" by German-born Hugo Chaim Adler, a leading composer of Reform liturgy. Adler's son, Samuel Adler, followed in his footsteps and many of his works have been showcased at Temple Beth Emeth, where his daughter, Marianne Aaron, is a long-time member.

"Art music" refers to music that is notated and arranged formally so that it conforms to the western classical tradition. It is performed without improvisation, meaning that the artist cannot change the lyrics, meter, or melody of a piece as a folk musician might do. In nineteenth and twentieth century Europe, art music was performed in salon and chamber settings for elite audiences.

Jewish musicians in central and eastern Europe wanted to elevate Jewish folk and liturgical music to the status of art music so that it would be respected and taken seriously in the western world. They formed the Society for Jewish Folk Music in St. Petersburg in order to respond to the trend toward nationalism in music by gathering Jewish folk music, notating it, and arranging it in classical settings.

The Jewish music residency is funded by the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies. It is the brainchild of SMTD alumna Emily Camras, a cellist in the Israel Sinfonietta Beersheva. Camras planned the first residency while she was a senior at SMTD and the second one from her home in Beersheva. She worked with current students to arrange for everything from student accompanists to airport pickups and then paid her own way to Ann Arbor in order to play cello in several of the performance pieces. Professor Caroline Helton, who is the SMTD faculty liaison to the Frankel Center, gives Emily Camras full credit for the vision of the Jewish art music residency. ■



Colorful A2SO season

Special to the WJN

Music Director and Conductor Arie Lipsky and the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra announce the orchestra's 91st season, a "celebration in sonic color." Seven mainstage concerts bring together timeless orchestral favorites and the freshest compositions by the next generation of classical composers in a colorful explosion of past and present. The season features a renewed focus on works by women, Latinx composers, composers of color, and living composers, including Joan Tower, Wang Jie, Duke Ellington, Arturo Márquez, and Roberto Sierra. A star-studded and award-winning line-up of guest artists includes Emanuel Ax, James Carter, Zlatomir Fung, and Measha Brueggergosman. The Music of Star Wars and the Best of Broadway add family fun to the concert lineup. "It's an exciting season packed with momentous music including time-honored classics and contemporary gems," says A²SO Executive Director Mary Steffek Blaske. The season also includes an exciting new monthly subscription program for students, with perks ranging from free upgrades to group seating with friends.

Opening night begins with an invitation to dance the night away in Hill Auditorium on September 13 with Grammy Award-winning pianist Emanuel Ax, who will play Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 2, a work filled with nods to Hungarian dances. Kodály's *Dances of Galánta* continues the program with the rhythms of Hungary, and the great American ballet *Appalachian Spring* by Aaron Copland rounds out the evening. The October 12 concert celebrates works "Made in America" and opens with the orchestral masterpiece of the same name by Grammy Award-winning, Gold Baton recipient Joan Tower. Concertgoers will hear Stravinsky's Divertimento from *The Fairy's Kiss* in its revised 1950 version for the New York City Ballet, and the Cello Concerto that Dvořák penned during his time in New York City, performed by Violin Channel Young Artist Zlatomir Fung. A thrilling new work from 2017 by Chinese-born American composer Wang Jie opens the November 2 program at the Michigan Theater: her Symphonic Overture on "America, the Beautiful" takes listeners on a musical flight to the top of Pike's Peak in Colorado. Concert Pianist Anton Nel returns to Ann Arbor to mesmerize the audience with the pinnacle of pianistic writing in Liszt's *Piano Concerto No. 1*, and Tchaikovsky's lush and romantic *Fifth Symphony* will sweep listeners to new melodic heights.

With the final installment of the *Star Wars* saga set to hit theaters in December, the A²SO will throw one final *Star Wars* music bash. The music of John Williams from eight *Star Wars* films comes to the Michigan Theater on November 9. For the holidays, the orchestra will pull out all the stops and bring Duke Ellington's jazz adaptation of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* to Hill Auditorium on December 13, along with other holiday favorites sung by local choral ensembles, including Measure for Measure.

On January 18, the A²SO throws its annual Mozart Birthday Bash with the International Tchaikovsky Competition-winning violinist Itamar Zorman who plays the "Turkish" Violin Concerto. Arie conducts Mozart's charming Symphony No. 29 along with favorite Mozart opera choruses sung by Ann Arbor's Vocal Arts Ensemble to conclude the celebration held at the Michigan Theater. World-renowned Bass-Baritone and University of Michigan School of Music Professor Stephen West will narrate the event.

The A²SO salutes the Best of Broadway in two programs on March 14 and 15 featuring beloved Broadway hits ranging from the golden age to modern musicals. The program will be the A²SO's first collaboration with the University of Michigan's Department of Theatre and Drama.

A celebration of Latinx contributions to classical music and the stories of Latinx communities will come to the Michigan Theater on March 21. Mexican composer Diana Syrse's *Colección de Realidades* (*Collected Realities*) is presented alongside the sensational *Danzón No. 2* by Arturo Márquez. James Carter plays Puerto Rican-born composer Roberto Sierra's Concerto for Saxophones and Orchestra for the first time on the Michigan Theater stage, and Bernstein's Symphonic Dances from West Side Story concludes the program. This epic 91st season finale at Hill Auditorium on April 25 opens with Giuseppe Verdi's Overture to La forza del destino. The celebrated Canadian soprano Measha Brueggergosman sings Cabaret Songs by Ann Arbor's own Pulitzer Prize-winning composer William Bolcom along with selections from Berlioz's *Summer Nights*. The orchestra gives its first performance in 20 years of Mahler's "Titan" Symphony to close the season.

This season, the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra will launch a new student subscriber program at $5 per month. All students enrolled at a degree-granting educational institution or a K-12 program during the 2019-2020 academic year are eligible for the discounted program. Student subscribers will be able to claim section F seats at all performances and can choose to sit with friends if group seats are available. All student subscribers will receive upgrades to A, B, and C sections upon request on the night of each performance pending availability. Students may also elect to subscribe to the traditional program in sections A-E at 50%-off full price. For more information about the new student subscriber program, visit a2so.com/student or call the box office at 734.994.4801.

The A²SO's chamber music series will continue next season at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor. The series will begin in October with a recital by award-winning cellist and Violin Channel Young Artist Zlatomir Fung. On November 4, Naumburg prize-winning virtuoso pianist Anton Nel will perform a selection of solo piano works. International Tchaikovsky Competition-winning violinist Itamar Zorman will be featured at the January 20 chamber performance, and the A²SO's principal musicians will present highlights from their repertoire on April 26 to conclude the chamber music series. Guests at this series will be invited to have coffee and dessert before each performance and will be seated cabaret-style at tables. All performances begin at 1:30 p.m. with refreshments served at 1:00 p.m. $10 general admission tickets go on sale July 15.

A range of season subscriptions are currently available by calling 734.994.4801. First time subscribers receive an additional subscription for free with the purchase of one full-price package. Subscriptions do not include tickets to Star Wars or The Best of Broadway, but subscribers will be given pre-sale access to these events. Tickets to individual concerts will go on sale to the public on July 15. ■

Vitals

Mazel tov

Eliana Adler on her bat mitzvah, May 25.
Susan Ayer on the birth of her granddaughter, Azalea Cone Eden Ayer, daughter of Ray Daniel Ayer and Dana Cone Schmidt.
Sarita Gankin on her bat mitzvah, May 25.
Mark & Cheryl Good and Phyllis Werbel on the engagement of son and grandson, Ian Good, to Jess Fugate.
Etan & Krin Klein on the birth of their daughter, sister of Yoav and Dawson, and granddaughter of Shira & Steve Klein.
Madeline Miller on her bat mitzvah, May 11.
Maia Morenoff on her bat bitzvah, May 18.
Jacob Resnick on his bar bitzvah, May 11
Hannah Rubenstein on her bat mitzvah, May 11.
Martha & Eric Young on the birth of their granddaughter, Phoebe Jane Krakauer, daughter of Rebecca & Ben Krakauer.
Hannah Ziegler on her bat mitzvah, May 4.

Condolences

Fruma Taub on the recent passing of her father, Leonard Taub.
Avram Derrow on the death of his grandfather, David Derrow, March 12.
Paulette Bromberg on the death of her mother, Ruth Bromberg, March 21.
Diane Blumson on the death of her sister, Roz Ashley, March 31.
Miriam Weininger on the death of her mother, Lotte Rosenbaum, April 1.
Daryl Hafter on the death of her husband, Monroe Hafter, April 3.
Judy (Alfred) Gourdji on the death of her mother, Rae Mike, April 3.
Mary Schuman and Nancy Leon on the death of their mother, Jean Grossman, April 7.
Prudence Rosenthal on the death of her husband, Amnon Rosenthal, April 10.
Cutler and Sussman families on the death of Simi Cutler, April 15

Obituaries

Monroe Hafter of Ann Arbor, Michigan , died on 03 April 2019. Beloved husband of 62 years of Daryl Hafter. Cherished father of Matthew (Beth) Hafter and Naomi Hafter. Loving grandfather of Mark and Claire Hafter. Dear brother of the late Ethel (the late Jim) Atz. Also survived by loving nieces and nephews. Interment at Beth Israel Gardens at Arborcrest Cemetery.
Monroe's adult life began with two years in the Navy during World War II. He then earned three degrees at Harvard University, ending with a Ph. D. in Spanish Literature in 1956. After three years teaching at Williams College, he came to the University of Michigan where he taught until his retirement in the Department of Romance Languages. As a scholar of Spanish writing, Hafter made frequent trips to Spain, studying at Madrid's National Library and building a substantial library of rare volumes which he donated to the University of Michigan Library. His research included the beginnings of women's authorship and intellectual currents within Spain's reading public. Monroe's family accompanied him, and with his two children in Spanish schools, he gained a unique window into Spanish culture.
His devotion to his family, his profession, and to Beth Israel Congregation came with a genial concern for everyone he met. Monroe truly spent his life making the world a happier and better place. Everyone who knew him took inspiration and comfort from his words. Arrangements by The Ira Kaufman Chapel

Rae Mike, 95, of Ann Arbor Michigan, died on 03 April 2019. Beloved wife of the late Simon Mike. Cherished mother of Judith (Alfred) Gourdji, Barry Mike (Companion Karen Westermoe) and David (Lourdes) Mike. Loving grandmother of Jeffrey Gourdji (Susan Gradman), Sharon Gourdji, Jessica Freiburger, Nicole (Bruce) Hagerty and Rachel (Ryan) Young. Adoring great-grandmother of Benjamin, Joshua & Evan Gourdji, Jacob & Liam Freiburger, Rachel, Evan & Sarah Hagerty, and Ryan Jr. & Sean Young. Interment in Beth Emeth Memorial Gardens at Arborcrest Cemetery. Arrangements by The Ira Kaufman Chapel.

Dr. Amnon "Ami" Rosenthal, 84, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, died on 10 April 2019.Dr. Rosenthal was born in 1934 in Gedera, Israel and came to the United States at 15 to attend Yeshiva High School. After graduating from Albany Medical School, he did his residency at the Children's Hospital in Boston MA where, in the fall of 1960, he met the love of his life Prudence 'Prue' Lloyd. In 1962, they married at her parents' home in Cape Cod before he joined the United States Air Force. During his service in France they gave birth to their first child, Jonathan. Upon his honorable discharge Captain Rosenthal returned to Boston Children's Hospital. There, he and Prue had two more boys Eben and Nathaniel and lived in Chestnut Hill. He was an AOA graduate of the Albany Medical College (1959), pediatric residency (1962) and cardiology fellowship (1968) at the Children's Hospital Medical Center in Boston. In 1977, after 10 years on the faculty of Harvard Medical School and staff at the Children's Hospital, Dr. Rosenthal moved to Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan Medical Center to take a position as a Professor of Pediatrics and Director of Pediatric Cardiology. Dr. Rosenthal's ground breaking research in congenital heart disease, including over 300 published articles and abstracts, resulted in new life saving techniques that have helped tens of thousands of children with heart problems lead normal lives. In 1993 he was honored with the Amnon Rosenthal Collegiate Professorship, made possible through departmental support as well as contributions from faculty, alumni, family and friends. In 2006 the U-M Board of Regents awarded Dr. Rosenthal professor emeritus status.
Dr. Rosenthal's extracurricular achievements matched his professional ones. His love of the University of Michigan, his Jewish heritage and philanthropy formed the foundation his life in Ann Arbor. Some highlights of his efforts; Chairman of the Michigan Daily board where he helped bring the paper out of the red and into the black. A force behind bringing the Ronald McDonald House to Ann Arbor, He established clinics throughout the state to ensure quality health care for all, and worked internationally to help children with heart disease in countries as far away as the UK, Israel and Korea. He gave generously to University Hospital, the Jewish Federation, and many other causes.
He is survived by his wife of 58 years, three sons, Jonathan, Eben, and Nat, and four grandchildren, Sarah, Walker, Ethan, and Rachel.

Simi Cutler, 93, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, died on 15 April 2019. Beloved wife of 72 years of Aaron Zelig Cutler. Cherished mother of Elana (Ronald) Sussman and Dan (Chris Merrill) Cutler. Proud grandmother of Mira (Doron Yitzchaki) Sussman, Ari (Jaimie) Sussman, Eitan (Joanna) Sussman, Naomi (Grant) Barton, and Sadie Cutler. Adoring great-grandmother of Matan, Ishai and Judah Sussman-Yitzchaki, Samuel and Anna Sussman, Nava and Ilan Sussman, and Nora and Phoebe Barton. Loving sister of the late Sidney (the late Sylvia) Bernstein. Dear sister-in-law of the late Basha (the late Morton) Shalev. Also survived by other loving relatives and friends here and in Israel.

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Yiddish Matters at Frankel Institute

Kelsey Robinette Keeves, special to the WJN

This coming fall the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies will bring together a group of Yiddish scholars, poets, translators, language teachers, and cultural leaders to discuss and research around the theme of "Yiddish Matters."

The University of Michigan has emerged as one of the world's leading centers for Yiddish studies, so it is fitting that the Frankel Institute will be a site for fresh explorations of the linguistic, literary, historical, political, and social significance of the language and the varying cultures it has engendered and continues to animate.

In recent years, the culture of Yiddish has continued to develop in exciting and unexpected ways. The success of Joel Grey's Yiddish translation of *Fiddler on the Roof* – in which UM Yiddish language instructor, Mikhel Yashinsky, is currently performing off Broadway – is only one of many indications of the continued appeal of Yiddish. It has been reclaimed both nostalgically and rigorously through scholarly and creative engagements with its literary traditions, music, film, and more. The effort to grasp the full resonance of Yiddish culture is still very much a work in progress, and the fellows at the Frankel Institute will contribute to this enterprise using a variety of approaches and methodologies.

"I am absolutely thrilled to be working with a group of scholars and intellectuals with such wide-ranging expertise and experience," says Julian Levinson, the head fellow of this year's group. "Yiddish studies has become an incredibly dynamic field, and we'll have folks from history, anthropology, linguistics, and literary studies, as well as translators working on new projects. I look forward to sharing our collective work with the broader community, within the university and beyond!"

Julian Levinson

The 2019-2020 fellows include scholars from Israel, America, and Poland. Some are just beginning their careers, having studied the language at summer programs and in graduate school. Others were born into Yiddish-speaking families, and, having studied disparate topics during their graduate years, subsequently returned to their mother tongue to emerge as the world's leading scholars of Yiddish language and culture. They work on a wide range of topics, including Yiddish space, food, poetry, and fiction in the Americas, Europe, and Israel. Several scholars examine Yiddish as a language of catastrophe; others celebrate the joy of Yiddish life.

"Next year's fellows stand as a testament to the vibrancy of scholarship on Yiddish culture," says Jeffrey Veidlinger, director of the Frankel Institute. "I look forward to learning with this esteemed group ,and invite everybody from the university and beyond to join us for the public events that will be organized around the theme."

The Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan provides annual fellowships for scholars and artists from around the world to conduct research in relation to a given theme. Established through a generous financial contribution from the Jean and Samuel Frankel Jewish Heritage Foundation, the Frankel Institute is committed to interdisciplinary, multilingual work spanning ancient times through the contemporary era. By combining intellectual autonomy with the ideal of a scholarly community, it offers global leadership in Jewish Studies.

The 2019–20 Frankel fellows and their fields of research are:

Justin Cammy, Smith College, "The Yiddish Trace in Contemporary Jewish Fiction and Popular Culture"

Yaakov Herskovitz, Tel-Aviv University, "Bilingualism Reimagined: Yiddish-Hebrew Literature in an Age of Monolingualism"

Eve Jochnowitz, Workmen's Circle and YIVO, "A kosherer top un a kosherer lefl: Yiddish Reactions to Modern Jewish Food Practices"

Dov-Ber Kerler, Indiana University, "By the Wayside: Contemporary Yiddish Poetry and the post-postvernacular"

Amy Kerner, Brown University, "Fragile Inheritance: Yiddish in Buenos Aires, 1930-1970"

Mikhail Krutikov, University of Michigan, "Urban Space in Jewish Literature(s)"

Jack Kugelmass, University of Florida, "Traveling in Yiddish"

Julian Levinson, University of Michigan, "A Translation of Isaiah Spiegel's *flamen fun der erd* (Flames from the Earth), an Autobiographical Novel of the Łódź Ghetto"

Harriet Murav, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, "Archive of Violence: The Literature of Abandonment and the Russian Civil War (1917-1922)"

Anita Norich, University of Michigan, "Yiddish Novels by Women"

Hannah Pollin-Galay, Tel-Aviv University, "My Foreign Mother Tongue: Khurbn Yiddish and the Cultural Contours of Trauma"

Eli Rosenblatt, Northwestern University , "Enlightening the Skin: Yiddish Culture in the Black Atlantic"

Karolina Szymaniak, University of Wroclaw, "A Little Something in Yiddish? Entangled Histories of Yiddish Polish Cultural Contacts in the First Half of the 20th Century (up to 1948)"

Nicholas Underwood, University of California Berkeley, "Yiddish Culture and Jewish Migration in Post-Holocaust France, 1944-1962"

Saul Zaritt, Harvard University, "Yiddish, Translation, and Jewish Language Afterlives: A Taytsh Manifesto" ■

Remembering the Jews of Iraq

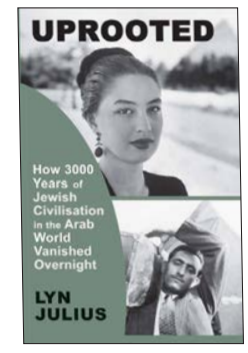
Review by Beth Dwoskin

In the book *Uprooted: How 3,000 Years of Jewish Civilisation in the Arab World Vanished Overnight* (2018) the author Lyn Julius has two agendas. Her first is to tell the story of the "Arab Jews" who resided in Moslem countries, in many cases since well before the birth of Islam. Around the time that the state of Israel was established, these Jews were "uprooted" – forced to leave their homes. Of roughly 850,000 refugees, about 650,000 made *aliya;* today their descendants comprise about 50% of Israel's Jewish population. This essential historical reality is almost completely unknown. Yet, the Arab-Jewish community has had a fundamental impact on modern Israeli history and culture.

Until recently, the Arabic-speaking community in Israel was categorized as Sephardic, but the more accurate term of Mizrahi has gained currency. Mizrahim are descended from Jews who literally never left the Middle East and North Africa. They were in Iraq since the time of the Babylonian exile. Ancient Jewish ruins have been found in Syria, and historical evidence of Jewish residence exists from Algeria to Libya. These Jews spoke Arabic or Judeo-Arabic as well as Hebrew, and they lived throughout the Middle East hundreds of years before the birth of Islam.

Why is this story unknown? Throughout the diaspora, the majority of Jews are Ashkenazic, and the Holocaust as experienced by European Jews has overpowered the narrative of modern Jewish history. Diaspora Jews, as well as non-Jews, know more about the Holocaust than about the state of Israel. After the war, the focus was on Ashkenazic refugees only. As far as the world knew, neither Mizrahi nor Palestinian refugees existed.

But the bigger issue is that the state of Israel made absorption of these refugees a priority and their existence and their problems were de-emphasized. In the get-tough years of early statehood the goal was to build a nation and to leave the past behind. The state was governed by secular Ashkenazim with training in European Enlightenment thought. They saw the Mizrahi refugees as primitive, with their large families, tribal customs, and religious traditions, and they wanted to assimilate them as quickly as possible.



The author's other agenda is overtly political. A child of expelled Iraqi Jews, she describes Jewish history in Arab lands in terms that are almost completely unfavorable. With copious research and ample quotes, she draws a picture of oppression and danger that is on a par with Jewish life in the Christian world.

Julius provides a lot of detail on the subject of "dhimmitude." Dhimmi status was conferred on non-Moslems of all types who lived on sufferance in Moslem lands as long as they paid the poll tax, which was higher for them than for Moslems. Testimony from many memoirs, as well as historical research, suggests that this arrangement made life far more tolerable for Jews in the Moslem world than in the Christian.

Lyn Julius is one of the first to offer a book that refutes this idea. She details the humiliations of dhimmitude, the complications of European colonialism, and the substantial Nazi influence in the Arab world before the war. She concludes that Moslems treated Jews at least as badly as Christians did, if not worse. She has even coined a bold term for the Arab expulsion of Jews: the Jewish *Nakba.*

Would the status of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians be different today if this issue had been raised earlier? Whether or not it's a significant element that could help resolve the struggle, the story of Jews from Moslem lands is a critical aspect of Jewish history that's been unrecognized for far too long.

Another complex view of Iraqi Jews will be offered during the Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival. On Wednesday, May 15 at 5 p.m. AAJFF is screening *Remember Baghdad,* a film following the lives of four Iraqi Jewish families. Guest speaker Levana Aronson, a Hebrew instructor at the University of Michigan, is related to the families in the film: "This film is incredibly meaningful to me. My family is rooted 2,500 years deep in Baghdad – a history that this film introduces and whets the appetite to learn more about. Among the producers of the film is my cousin David; one of the narrators is my mother's 90 year old cousin who was able to finally leave Iraq in 1973. My parents, my sisters and my brother left in 1950, so I am the only one who was not born there. I am so proud of my heritage and that my children are so interested in learning more about it." Aronson and will be answering questions for the audience after the film. ■

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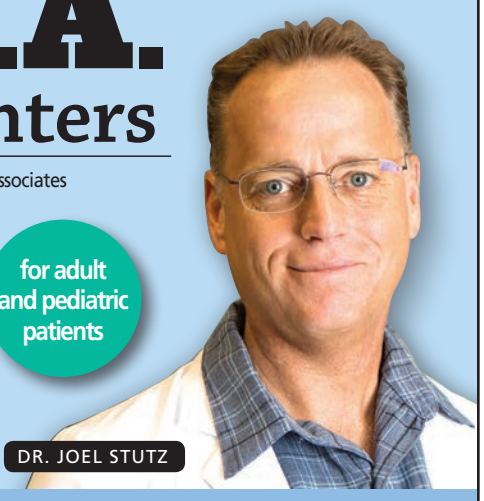
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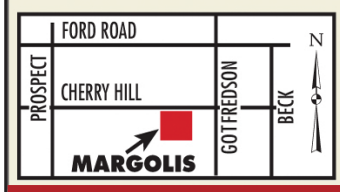

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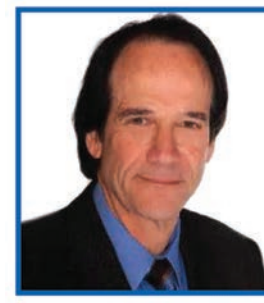

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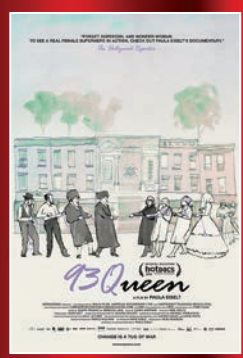

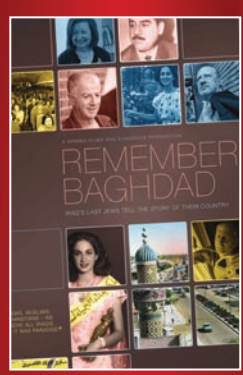

SUNDAY, MAY 12, 2019

5:00PM – 93 Queen (2018, documentary, English, 90min)

8:00PM – Budapest Noir (2017, drama/mystery, Hungarian w/subtitles, 95min)
WARNING: This film is intended for mature audiences.

MONDAY, MAY 13, 2019

2:00PM – The Unorthodox (2018, dramedy/history, Hebrew w/ subtitles, 92min)

4:45PM – Sponsor Dinner @ Knight's (Downtown)

6:45PM – Why the Jews (2017, documentary, English, 40min)

TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2019

5:00PM – The Samuel Project (2018, PG-13, drama, English, 92min)

7:30PM – The Ancient Law (1923, silent drama, German w/English intertitles, 135 min)
Live musical accompaniment by renowned Klezmer violinist, Alicia Svigals, and pianist, Donald Sosin. *Sponsored by Kol Halev, the choir of Temple Beth Emeth*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2019

5:00PM – Remember Baghdad (2017, documentary, English/Arabic/Hebrew w/subtitles, 69 min)
Guest Speaker: **Levana Aronson, lecturer-Modern Hebrew Language, and member of an Iraqi Jewish family profiled in the film.** *Sponsored by: Stephen and Levana Aronson*

8:00 PM – Shoelaces (2018, drama, Hebrew w/subtitles, 98min)
Sponsored by Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County

THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2019

5:00PM – Shorts Program **An Average Story** *(18min),* **Boxes** *(13min),* **Death Metal Grandma** *(14min),* **Gefilte** *(11min),* **A Thousand Kisses** *(15min),* **A Night in the Garden** *(5min).*
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8:00PM – The Last Suit (2018, drama w/light humor, Spanish w/subtitles, 91min)

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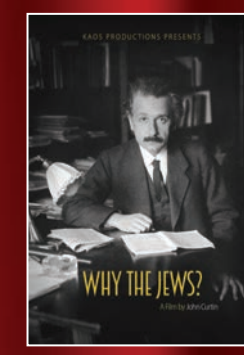

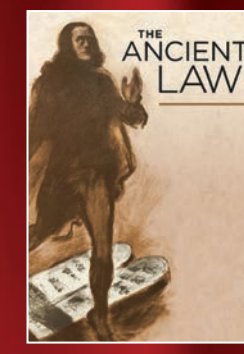

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